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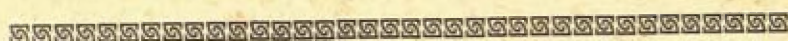
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GREEK GODS AND HEROES

FRIEDRICH PFISTER



GREEK GODS AND HEROES

Translated from the German by
MERVYN SAVILL



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To my wife Irmgard

My children Hildegard, Ilse, Hedwig and Bernhard

To my sons-in-law Gustav Schrabal and Rasso Mutzbauer

And my grand-daughter Suzanne

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INTRODUCTION

AFTER a profound study of Greek religion lasting almost half a century I am publishing this book, the results of my researches. I have made every effort not to make it too pedantic. By and large it is intended to be read for pleasure and to introduce the layman to a world which is still very much alive today. The Greek myths have become an integral part of our heritage and it is impossible in considering a thousand years of world literature and European art to ignore the Greek myths which pre-occupied so many of the poets and artists of the past. At the same time by a study of the epics we obtain a far deeper insight into the Hellenic spirit than philosophy or Greek sculpture allow, and we can safely put ourselves in the hands of the old poets.

It is rather strange that there was no satisfactory book on this subject in German, for Gustav Schwab's fine work which rendered great service for more than a century is no longer valid today. It excluded the original myths and merely offered us the epics of the heroes, and these only in an incomplete version. The disjointed yet scholarly work of Preller-Robert, like Roscher's lexicon, is of use solely to scholars. It is my hope, then, that the present book will give pleasure to the general reader.

There can be no doubt as to the best way of dealing with the Greek myths as a whole. We can only treat the Greek myth as an entity in the same way that the late manuals, which have come down to us from antiquity, have done: arranged according to their family trees and, in consequence, in an historical sequence of mythical events. Only occasionally does one have to consider where an individual myth has to be inserted. For example the struggle of Heracles with Pylus can be told either in the Heracleian myths or in saga of Neleus; the cattle of Helios can be related with reference to the Sun God or to Odysseus; the story of Hesione told in the History of the Trojan royal house or in the saga of Heracles. In such cases where a double version is available the stories may vary. For instance in the case of

Telephus; in one version he is born in Arcady and in the other in Asia Minor. It is not unduly difficult to give a site to hero races whose family trees are unrelated to any of the other great genealogies, such as the race of Odysseus or of Tantalus, or to introduce individuals who are definitely not related genealogically.

That the sagas themselves stem from very ancient sources is obvious. Fundamentally, for my sources, I have used only those which are older than fourth century B.C. or later texts confirmed by some work of art which preserved the old tradition. The reader can, therefore, be assured of finding in this book the myths as they were known to literature at the end of the fifth century. Since in these four centuries, from which most of my sources originate, the myths were constantly told and changed, in the many resultant variations from the old tradition I had to confine myself to using the most important. To illustrate the differences of text, as in the case of Helen, rational interpretations were given when they belonged to our age. The mythological manual of Pseudo-Apollodorus and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* naturally contain many myths which can safely be taken as ancient although there is no definite proof of this. They had to be omitted in order to keep the size of the book within reasonable proportions.

The basic text of my book has often been pieced together in mosaic form from various traditions. I have given either a free translation or allowed one of the Greek poets to speak in his own verses in order to show the myth-creating power of the poet and the way in which he saw and described the gods and heroes. If, in these attempts, I have been able to arouse in the reader a desire to consult Homer and the tragedians, Pindar or Bacchylides I shall feel that my task has not been in vain. It will introduce him to Greek poetry and to the art of Greek sculpture, the favourite subject of which was the myth.

My manuscript, except for a single copy, was destroyed in the bombing of Würzburg in March 1945. Fortunately, however, this typed copy came into my hands once more in August of that year. Since I had many other commitments on my hands I postponed the final revisions until some of my friends insisted that I should complete the task and add the final touches.

PREFACE

BEFORE embarking on the myths of the Greek gods and heroes let us remark that terms 'myth' and 'mythology' have been given a variety of meanings and it is therefore as well to clarify what we mean by these two words.

For Herder, mythology and religion were identical concepts and his definition has been followed until recent years. Under the title *Greek Mythology*, L. Preller (1854) gave an account of the Greek gods and heroes, their myths and cults. For him, too, mythology was synonymous with religious dogma and his work has been republished many times since his death under its original title. On the other hand, in modern times, it has been maintained that myth has nothing to do with religion and that it is purely poetry and literature. These views are naturally diametrically opposed to each other.

By myth, we mean general accounts of the gods, divine creatures and heroes, but this definition is subject to a single restriction. Let us examine the tale of a heroine, Helen the wife of Menelaus, as Herodotus tells it (VI. 61).

A Spartan named Agetus who lived in the sixth century before Christ married the most beautiful woman in Sparta. As a child, however, she had been so ugly that she had caused her parents great sorrow. Even her nurse was saddened that the daughter of such rich parents was so uncomely and she sought outside aid. Day after day she took the child to the Temple of Helen, placed it in front of the statue of the goddess and implored her to change the child's ugly appearance. One day, as the nurse left the temple, a woman approached and asked her what she was carrying in her arms. 'A child,' the nurse replied. When the woman asked to see it she was loth to grant her request because the parents had forbidden her to show her charge to anyone. The woman insisted, however, and the nurse relented. The stranger then proceeded to stroke the child's head and said that one day she would be the most beautiful woman in Sparta.

From this very moment the girl's looks began to change and on reaching marriageable age she married Agetus and later became the wife of King Ariston of Sparta.

This miraculous story tells of a heroine, of Helen who was worshipped in a temple in Sparta, but at the same time it is no myth. For in our opinion the nature of a hero myth requires that it should tell of the deeds performed by heroes during their lifetime. Herodotus' tale, however, is based on a miracle performed by Helen long after she had left this world. After her death she had been raised to the rank of heroine, and became the object of a special cult. Here it is a question of an epiphany of a heroine after her death.

We must classify this tale as a legend. The myth of Helen, however, tells of her birth, her destiny, her abduction by Paris to Troy, how this abduction caused a great war and how, later, she was brought back to Sparta by Menelaus.

Similar stories of the gods have also been handed down which we shall also term legends. Herodotus again (VI. 105) tells of the god Pan: at the time of the Persian War this god appeared to a fellow countryman, an Athenian herald who was carrying an urgent message through Arcady. The god called him by name and told him to ask the Athenians why they had abandoned him. He was well disposed towards them, had rendered them many services in the past and would do the same in the future. On receiving the message the Athenians built a temple to the god and worshipped him with yearly offerings.

This, too, is no myth but a legend since it dates from historical times. A requisite of a myth, therefore, is that the events should bate from the mists of time. For the Greeks this mythical age was before the return of the Heraclids and the eventual migration of the Ionians to Asia Minor. For the Greeks this was naturally not antiquity but the period from primitive times to the beginning of the Iron Age, as Hesiod expresses it, to the date which later Greek historians made every effort to determine chronologically. Thus in Greek tradition the term myth applies to those accounts of which heroes, gods and divine creatures are the central figures up to the return of the Heraclids. It is a characteristic of these myths that the details were considered

gospel truth by the Greeks and the subjects in question became objects of worship.

As we have already seen in the Helen legend not only the gods but the heroes were worshipped. All the great heroes who figured in the myth as living characters of the past, such as Achilles, Agamemnon, Menelaus, Ajax, Odysseus, Diomedes, Perseus, the Dioscuri, Heracles, Theseus, Oedipus, Amphiaraus, and heroines such as Helen, Iphigenia, Alcmene, Danaë, Medea and Ariadne all enjoyed in historical times a cult and shrines with sacrifices and strange rites. As a general rule these heroes were worshipped in the provinces and cities of their origin according to the tradition of the myth.

A hero, in the sense of Greek religion, was a dead person who by some service, outstanding deeds or achievements was considered worthy of special worship. This hero worship was also a cult of the dead, based on the belief that the dead man could continue to exert an influence and, through sacrifice and other forms of respect, could be persuaded to perform further services. If during his lifetime a man were mighty and famous he became after death the object of special worship, in other words a hero cult.

Since hero worship is merely an enhanced ancestral worship, we must accept that it was practised in the form of the latter. But this is not always the case with the heroes of the ancient myths. The cult dedicated to them embraced all manner of rites which are to be found in the worship of the gods but alien to ancestral worship, and the aid which was expected from the hero was often at variance with the nature of the mythical hero but referred far more to cases of everyday human life in which the gods would also be invoked for aid. Thus the heroes could be effective in all fields. They could heal, prophesy, influence the weather, make the land fertile, give help in battle and could punish in their anger any blasphemer who offended them. Epiphanies of heroes in Greek legends are as frequent as the appearances of the gods. Nor was the worship of these heroes, as is the case in a cult of the dead, confined to their tomb or bound up with their earthly remains: they could also be worshipped and appear as helpers in other places.

Thus offerings were not made to heroes such as Heracles,

Achilles, Menelaus, Hippolytus, Helen and Alcmene according to the rites of the dead but in accordance with the rites of the Olympian gods. In Amyclae Agamemnon was worshipped as Zeus-Agamemnon and we also find a Zeus-Amphiaraus and a Zeus-Trophonius. On the shores of the Black Sea Achilles was worshipped as Pontarches (Lord of the Sea) and Helen in Rhodes as Dendritis (a tree goddess). Although ordinary mortals were not allowed to be buried in the sanctuaries of the gods, many of the tombs of the heroes were in such holy precincts and closely associated with the worship of the gods. Thus Ariadne was buried in the shrine of Dionysus in Argos (many tombs of the same heroes were located at different places) or on Cyprus in the sacred grove of Aphrodite bearing the name of Ariadne; Erectheus in the shrine of Athene on the Acropolis; Hyacinthus in the shrine of Apollo at Amyclae; Iphigenia in the shrine of Artemis at Brauron and the children of Medea in the Hera Temple at Corinth. In the case of Asclepius it was not certain whether he was to be termed a god or hero, i.e. as a character of the mythical age. In the Homeric epic he is a doctor who lived before the Trojan war, but in his cult at Epidaurus he was a god of healing.

All of which proves that the heroes of the old myth were once gods, the objects of a cult, subsequently becoming primitive men in the sagas and raised to the status of heroes in the cult. The names of these heroes in many cases cannot be explained by Greek or Indo-Germanic etymology. They stem, therefore, from the pre-Grecian population of the Balkan Peninsula and were adopted together with their cults by the Aeolian and Ionian races of the Greeks after their migration in about 2000 B.C. Some of these heroes, such as the Dioscuri, may have been brought by the migrating Greeks from their original Indo-Germanic homeland. In the course of the centuries more and more myths grew around these divine heroes to be handed down by word of mouth, in prose or in a mixture of prose and verse but also to be transformed into ballad-like songs by poets and declaimed at the princely courts of the Mycenaean Age. Thus the roots of the Greek hero myths already lie in the age of Mycenaean culture (about 1600 to 1200 B.C.), the bearers of which were Greek. Their elements are of very varied origin.

Some of the sagas and motifs were brought by the Greeks as their primitive Indo-Germanic possession. Others were invented after they had settled in the land, while others again were taken over as sagas from the autochthonous population of the Balkan Peninsula and developed. Much of course is due to the imagination and creative powers of poets. Thus the names of the heroes of a saga may have changed many times, and fairy stories of different origin, which were originally told of nameless persons, entered the realm of myth.

In these Aeolian and Ionic songs from the Mycenaean Age, arranged in strophes, in lyrical short verses, were described the deeds of heroes considered as the ancestors of the Mycenaean princes and as a result held in veneration.

The locations of all these myths were naturally in the places where the Greeks settled at that time on the mainland and the Mycenaean strongholds, the founders and lords of which had once been the heroes sung in the epics. In Mycenae, Tiryns and Argos, in Thebes and Orchomenos, in Sparta and Pylos, in Attica and Thessaly, Aeolian and Ionic Greeks created these myths. The Dorians did not subscribe to them because they migrated into the Balkan Peninsula at a later date.

But just as the secularization of former gods and the creation of epics round their persons belong to the Mycenaean Age, naturally their worship as original gods was of infinite variety and on their becoming venerated heroes preserved the same conservative forms into historical times; the shrines of these former gods were traditionally at the site of their tombs in which their remains were supposed to lie and the ritual remained unchanged. The ballads in which the myth was presented and declaimed by singers to the lyre were written in the current Greek language, the ancient Aeolian and Ionic dialects. And these songs were also sung by singers such as have been described to us in the figures of Demodocus and Phemius in the *Odyssey*, at the Princes' courts in the Mycenaean Age, at meals, funerals and at feasts staged in honour of the gods and heroes. Although none of these songs has survived, their content, the myth, was transformed into the verse of Homer, and perhaps the best picture that we have of their form is in the song of Bacchylides—the ballad of Theseus—which is given in translation later on in

this book. The 'Praise of famous men', in other words the hero myths, was the subject of these lays.

The Mycenaean Guild singers, who declaimed their own verse, had already created a strong tradition in their art, in versification and poetic language with formal terms of praise, ornate yet constant epithets and specific motives. In a several hundred years tradition an art of declamation and the subject-matter were preserved by constant repetition. In this way, in other words by word of mouth, the foundations were laid for the artistic language in which the Homeric epics were couched. It contained words the full significance of which was as little understood at the time of Homer as at the time of the late Greek grammarians who racked their brains to explain them. When in these songs cultural phenomena appear, such as weapons, houses and geographical data, it was naturally the culture of the poet's lifetime, the culture of the Bronze Age, a knowledge of which had been transmitted by the handing down of these songs to the poets of a later period. As a result the Homeric epic which was written in the Iron Age describes many of the cultural conditions reigning in the Mycenaean or Bronze Age.

This Mycenaean culture was partially destroyed during a new period of migrations when the Dorians swept down from the north in the twelfth century B.C. and occupied a considerable part of the mainland. At the turn of this century large sections of the population wandered eastwards and colonized the islands of the Aegean and the west coast of Asia Minor. These nomads took with them to their new homeland their religion, cults and myths, and thus Greek gods and myths as well as the old Aeolian and Ionic songs celebrating their sagas were transplanted to the colonies. They continued to be sung and developed in this new country. As a result the scene where the myth had taken place was changed and extended. As soon as the worship of Achilles, Idomeneus and Calchas was transplanted to Asia Minor their shrines were held to be their tombs, and the myth that they themselves had come and died there during their lifetime was inevitably born. This had to be founded and expressed in the myth, and thus the newly won colony was drawn into the realm of the saga and there was now mention of exploits of these heroes as though they had taken place in these countries. Thus

many of the heroic battles which according to the original saga had taken place in the motherland were now transposed to Asia Minor. At the end of the eighth century when Sicily and Lower Italy were colonized by the Greeks, the Greek heroes were accepted there and the saga could now maintain that Odysseus, Diomedes, Philoctetes and others had sailed in a westerly direction on their journey home from Troy. The sagas, too, of Minos and Aeneas were also extended in this way and their wanderings were transposed to the West. Not until the settlement of north-western Asia Minor by the Greeks could Troy, which lies in this region, become the theatre of a great war and so many legends be concentrated round this city which originally had been described in individual songs. Now these were amalgamated into great epics.

The Troad was at the same time inhabited by Thracian and Phrygian races and possibly the Aeolian and Ionic Greeks did not settle there until the ninth century. These battles with the autochthonous population of the Troad may have given rise to the saga of the Trojan war, the main battlefield being located round Troy. In any case, the Mycenaean fortress, the so-called Troy VI, on the foundations of which the later Ilium was built, never saw a Greek poet because it was destroyed by an earthquake at the beginning of the thirteenth century B.C. The even older settlement, Troy II, from which Heinrich Schliemann brought to light the famous gold and silver treasures (the Treasure of Priam) also dated from the second half of the third aeon. Had a Greek colonial singer visited Troy he would have found, instead of Ilium, a rather wretched village. The description of Troy which we read in the *Iliad* cannot then have been based on what the poet saw here with his own eyes but upon the old songs and upon his own poetic imagination.

Our first records of the Greek myths, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, date from about 800 B.C., and all the poems and prose works which we shall use in this book follow in unbroken sequence.

The picture we obtain of the gods and heroes from this wealth of tradition stretching over several centuries is, despite the great variety of the events told and later transformations, preserved in unity however differently Aeschylus and Euripides may have brought Menelaus and Orestes on to the stage. This unity arises

because the picture bears the imprint of the old epic poems and all the later portrayals of the myth are dependent upon the epic to a certain extent. Thus, merely to quote a minor figure, Thersites, who finally claimed the right to freedom of speech for later generations of Greeks who were intensely proud of this human right, was considered a despicable creature and quite rightly thrashed by Odysseus. Homer had portrayed him in this way and by doing so the very man who was the protagonist of the right of free speech was despised for all time and only a cynic would have dared to say a good word for him.

The nature of the gods was not so very different from that of the heroes. They were both based on the lives of the aristocracy living in the Mycenaean citadels. The gods were also portrayed as humans except that they were immortal, did not age and delighted in offerings brought to them by men. The gods existed and had to be respected by men even if they did not fulfil a particularly necessary function in the universe. They were neither creators nor preservers of the world. Apart from Hephaestus, the Olympian blacksmith, they did no useful work except occasionally invent something useful. Hermes invented the lyre, and both Athene and Apollo taught men the individual arts. They lived a life of leisure on Olympus or in the sky. They ate and drank, made love and enjoyed themselves with music, singing and dancing; they laughed a great deal and occasionally permitted mortals to laugh at them. What a difference between Jahweh of the Old Testament or the Christian God, neither of whom ever had a hearty laugh.

The Greek gods trafficked freely with human beings, played a personal part in the battles of the heroes and helped their favourites. They had love affairs with human women and produced countless children. Many goddesses, particularly those on a lower level, bestowed their favours on mortals. Among the great goddesses this only applied to Aphrodite and Demeter. Artemis, Athene and Hestia remained virgins. Hera was faithful to her spouse; when the wife of Zeus once brought a son into the world without the aid of her husband it was an Immaculate Conception and no mortal man was to blame.

The Greek myth tells mainly of virile exploits, of war and battle, deeds in which physical strength and cunning were used,

sometimes against the gods, and of love with the aim of procreation. Everything transpires, creating life, preserving and destroying, in our earthly world. In this world lies the entrance to the underworld through which many heroes passed in their lifetime, and Olympus, where the gods dwelt, was rooted in it. Swift as the lightning flash the gods could descend to earth among men. They, too, are portrayed as mortals. Deeds and love within the confines of earth—that is the content of the Greek myths.

Thus the myth is a religious tale in so far as the protagonists are gods—in other words persons worthy of veneration. But its content, apart from this attribute of the characters, is incontrovertibly profane. Give the gods and heroes the names of ordinary men and a profane tale usually remains, occasionally taking refuge in the miraculous but containing very little of what we usually term 'religious'.

Life after death had little attraction for the heroes unless, like Heracles, Menelaus and Achilles, they withdrew to the Isles of the Blest. After their death most of them descended into gloomy Hades, described in the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*. Even the favoured ones left the beautiful earth as unwillingly as the others, and the same sadness was left by the Greek heroes as that described in the song of King Haakon on the German fallen: 'the host was not joyful: they were loth to take the path to Valhalla'.

But the ancient Hellenic hero ideal, firmly rooted in this world, changed just as the philosophy of the Greeks changed from materialism to contemplation of the next world. The ideal of the ancient Grecian hero was gradually transformed into the ideal of the Christian saint: 'the heroes fought for the earth, the saints wrestled for heaven'. We may quote one single example: Heracles, the only real national hero of the Greeks of whom a portrait existed at the beginning of the Christian era. This so greatly resembles the portrait of Christ as written in the Gospels that the Christian account may well have been based entirely on the *Life of Heracles*.

Here Heracles is portrayed as the ideal of the stoic sage who, obeying his father in heaven, wages for the good of mankind all manner of battles, leads a simple life of toil and trouble, even

conquers death, and as a saviour of man and the Son of God is finally raised to the Godhead. Like Jesus, Heracles as a child eludes his enemies only with difficulty. He withdraws before his public life into the wilderness and falls into temptation. All his activities, as in the case of Jesus, are at the command of the heavenly father, and they are effected by the obedience of the son. The way that both have to travel is the way of suffering, at the end of which is the apotheosis. Both of them utter the same words before they die: 'It is finished', and both turn with similar words to their heavenly father. Jesus says: 'Father, unto Thee I commend my spirit', while Heracles says: 'Stars, I beg you, receive my spirit. . . . See, my Father calls me and the sky opens. I come, Father, I come'. Whereas the old Grecian heroes placed their destiny, lived and fought for it, in this world, Heracles, at the turn of the first century, turns his gaze towards the beyond from which he has received orders and to which he longs to return after a life full of suffering. In this respect the picture of the Greek hero approaches the ideal which later inspired the Christian saints.

No race has ever possessed a mythology comparable to that of the Greeks: a tradition which, in its ramifications, serves as the portrayal of the history of primitive ages, the protagonists being at the same time objects of a cult, in other words the historic and sacred tradition of a race for the well-being of which all races and countries played a part, welded by the greatest poets into eternal form as epic, lyrical and dramatic verse and hewn by talented artists into immortal sculptures. Gods, lacking all transcendence, myths which took place here below, gods and heroes being invoked by their worshippers to fulfil their earthly desires and, in the myths, trafficking with humans on earth. To the Greeks these gods and heroes were a living power which accompanied them throughout their lives. In the cities and on the roads which led through the country, shrines, chapels, memorials, trees, groves, rocks, rivers and springs testified to their existence and their activities. Everywhere their pictures could be seen. Jewellery, sacred and profane vessels told of their deeds, and every poem at sacred festivals or at drinking bouts spoke of them. Never has there been a religion which called forth so little fear and spiritual torment, blood and tears,

as the Greek. Although the Greek myth itself contained terror and despair, murder and grief in plenty, the poems which revealed this myth liberated men from such suffering.

The vitality of these divine figures and their myths has remained down to our day, even though belief in the existence of these gods has long since disappeared. The Greek poets and artists endowed them with immortality and what they created has endured.

SOURCES

THE myth is the content of the oldest literary property of the Greeks—the Homeric epic. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* alone have come down to us. There were, however, many far older epics dating from the eighth and seventh centuries which have been lost but the contents of which are to a large extent known. We enumerate here the most important of these, starting with the Trojan cycle to which the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are also devoted.

The *Cypria* epic related the prehistory of the Trojan wars beginning with the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, followed by the birth of Helen, the judgment of Paris, the expedition to Ilium and the first battles, describing in these the capture of the booty in the tenth year of the siege when the daughter of Chryses, the priest of Apollo, fell into the hands of the Greeks. In this way we acquire a link with our *Iliad* which covers the battle of the tenth year from the grief of Achilles to the death of Hector and the lament for him. A continuation of the *Iliad* is represented by the *Æthiopis*, which relates the battles against the two new Trojan allies, Penthesilea, the Amazon, and Memnon, the Prince of the Ethiopians, and also the death of Achilles, his burial and the quarrel for his weapons. The *Little Iliad* gave the conclusion of the battles with the capture and destruction of the city. The latter events were also recounted in a special epic, the *Iliu Persis*. The individual sagas of the return of the heroes were contained in the *Nostoi* (the Returns) and, in the *Odyssey* which has survived, we can read of the wanderings and homecomings of Odysseus. The *Odyssey* is supplemented by the *Telegony*, which describes the fate of the Laertid and his son, Telegonus.

For the Theban sagas we have intelligence of three great epics—the *Oedipodia*, the *Thebaid* and the *Epigoni* describing the fate of the Theban royal race down three generations, above all the story of Oedipus and his sons, the expedition of the Seven against Thebes and the capture of Thebes by the Epigoni.

We can partially restore the content of these lost epics from

prose extracts and from later poems which have used them as their sources and from plastic works of art based on them. We also know a host of quotations from them in later literature.

In addition to these famous epics we know of epic poems in which the sagas of the Danaids, of Heracles, Theseus, Meleager and the Argonauts were described. In particular there is a *Heracles* epic by Pisander dating from the sixth century and another by Panyassis from the time of the Persian wars which, like the *Titanomachia*, have been lost. In addition there are the so-called Homeric hymns in which the gods and their myths are sung. In these poems we have detailed myths of Apollo, Hermes, Aphrodite, Dionysus and Demeter as well as several shorter hymns. Some of these hymns date from a later age (down to the fifth century). In the fifth century there is also a small epic poem of 480 verses which has survived and is attributed to Hesiod, *The Shield of Heracles* (*Aspis*). It describes the conflict between Heracles and Cycnus.

In the old days all the important myths were in epic form in hexameters. Sagas of lesser importance and local myths were written and sung by local poets. Many myths were also handed down by word of mouth, as for example stories of King Minos of Crete, quoted by Herodotus (VII. 170) and Thucydides (I. 4) from verbal accounts; the saga of Minos and Pasiphaë appears to have been introduced into literature for the first time by Euripides. Thucydides (I. 9, 2) quotes the oral tradition in his account of the wanderings of Pelops into the Peloponnese and the passing of the Mycenaean rule of the Persids to the sons of Pelops. The great epics, however, were committed to papyrus from the very outset.

Hesiod complemented the Homeric verses, also in hexameters with epic poetry as his source, in a scholarly classification of the myths about 700 B.C. In the *Theogony* Hesiod gives an account of the creation of the world and the gods, of the three generations of Uranus, Cronus and Zeus, of the battle of the Titans, of the issue of the gods and goddesses culminating in the *Catalogue of Women*, a list of mortal women who through gods or heroes became the ancestresses of the hero races. Only fragments of this catalogue have survived.

From about 700 B.C. the plastic arts begin to exploit the

myths inspired by the epic, and they now become the main theme above all in vase paintings. Vases and tablets of the late geometrical style are the first examples on which figure the exploits of Heracles and Theseus, details of the Trojan cycle, and from the first half of the sixth century onwards the mythological scenes on pottery become extraordinarily numerous, particularly on the black-and-red figured vases. Of the mythological portraits on early bas-reliefs we need only mention here the metopes of Selinunt (*ca.* 600), the reliefs of Delphi; the treasure chambers of Sicyon, Siphnus and Athens from the sixth century, and particularly the metopes of the latter, which, for the first time, portrayed the myths for us in cyclical sequence; the exploits of Theseus and Heracles, the sculptures of the temple of Zeus at Olympia from the sixtieth year of the fifth century, also showing the cycle of the twelve labours of Heracles, and the frieze of Heroön at Gjölbashi in Lycia which dates from the middle of the fifth century. Far older, from about the year 600 B.C., were the so-called chests of Cypselus which stood in the Heraeum at Olympia and whose mythological reliefs with inscriptions have been described by Pausanias (V. 17 *et seq.*), and the throne of Apollo in Amyclae made by Bathycles towards the end of the sixth century, also decorated with reliefs, according to Pausanias (III. 18).

About 700 B.C., therefore, the stock of myths had been recorded in script in epic form. The great sagas were incorporated in cycles in which many individual legends found a place, and Hesiod produced a systematic, geological overall picture of the myths. From this period onwards no further great myths were created, with the possible exception of the legends of Orpheus which belong to the seventh and sixth centuries. Nevertheless, the lyrical creative powers in the three hundred years from Hesiod to Euripides produced works which rank with the Homeric epics, and the plastic arts reached their peak. The power and the imagination needed to create new myths, however, had vanished for ever. Neither Pindar, Aeschylus nor the great vase painters were creators but interpreters and portrayers of myths. In this period, from the end of the eighth century, vanishes the monopoly of the West in the realm of the myths due to the expanding Greek colonization. Shortly afterwards the Black Sea

became a route for shipping, and here, too, the Greek traders planted the roots of their mythological tradition: the traces of the Argonauts were sought and found and Aea, the land of the sun, where they visited the Aeëtes, was discovered in Colchis. In the coastal area of Asia Minor the myth had already previously been planted.

In this age the creation of legends flourished. They related the deeds of gods and heroes in historical times, and, in the seventh and sixth centuries, books of folk tales in prose appeared containing the legends of the Seven Wise Men, of Aesop, of Anacharsis, of Homer and Hesiod and their poetic contests, and many short stories, such as the story of Gyges and the ring of Polycrates, entered world literature thanks to Herodotus. In these prose stories an entirely different spirit reigns from that to be found in the heroic epic. Here intelligence and wisdom replace courage, bodily strength and bravery as ideals.

Not much of the older Greek poetry from the beginning of the seventh century has survived, but we know that in particular the choruses sung in honour of the gods and heroes perpetuated the myths, and from the many references in other works we learn something of the form the myths took on in these lyrics, as in the works of Alcman, Stesichorus, Simonides, Alcaeus and Sappho, and large fragments have been preserved of the work of the two young versifiers of the first half of the fifth century, Pindar and Bacchylides. Neither of the latter confined themselves entirely to hymns to the gods, which were devoted in the main to the relation of the myths, but in their paeans celebrating the prize in the great contest the subject-matter was generally based on the myth or purely mythical stories.

Even more important as regards the form of the myths and for our knowledge of the mythological tradition is the Attic tragedy of the fifth century. We possess seven tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles respectively, seventeen tragedies and a satire of Euripides, and a further play (*Rhesus*) by an unknown poet from a somewhat later period. Furthermore, countless fragments from all three afford us many mythological details. All these tragedies with the exception of *The Persians* by Aeschylus take as subject-matter a fragment of a heroic saga, most of them based on an epic but often a free version by the poet in an

attempt to interpret the myths. Of the thirty-two surviving plays based on mythology, half the scenes are from the Trojan cycle. The following is a list of these plays in their historical or mythological sequence: Euripides, *Iphigenia in Aulis* (the massing of the Greek army in Aulis, the sacrifice and abduction of Iphigenia); the pseudo-Euripidean *Rhesus* (death of the Thracian Prince Rhesus during the war, according to the *Iliad*, Book 10); the *Ajax* and the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles (scenes from the last year of the war after the death of Achilles); Euripides, the *Trojan Women*, *Hecuba* and *Andromache* (the fate of the Trojan women after the sack of the city), the *Helen* of Euripides (Helen's return home), the satire by Euripides, *Cyclops* (Odysseus and the Cyclops, Polyphemus), the *Orestia* of Aeschylus (*Agamemnon*, *Choephora*e and *Eumenides*), Sophocles' *Electra* and Euripides' *Electra*, *Orestes*, *Iphigenia in Tauris* (Agamemnon's murder, the revenge and penance of Orestes). Then follow the six tragedies with sagas from the Theban cycle: *Oedipus Tyrannus* and *Oedipus at Colonus* (the fate of Oedipus), Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* and Euripides' *Phoenissae* (the expedition of the Seven against Thebes), Sophocles' *Antigone* and Euripides' *Suppliants* (the fall of Thebes). Three further tragedies are taken from the Heracles cycle—Sophocles' *Trachiniae*, Euripides' *Heracles* and *The Children of Heracles*. In the *Alcestis* of Euripides, Heracles plays a leading role. The remaining plays belong to different cycles: Aeschylus' *Suppliants* to the Danaid myth; Aeschylus' *Prometheus*; Euripides' *Hippolytus* and *Ion*, two Attic sagas; *Medea* from the Argonaut saga and the *Bacchae* from the saga of Dionysus.

The shaping of the myths by the tragedians had very strong influence in the future both on literary tradition and the plastic arts. As a result today we are no longer in a position to determine the exact form of a saga as it existed before its adaptation in dramatic verse, whether it was a forgotten epic poem or to some extent the artistic creation of the playwright. There is no basic difference between mythological and 'historical' tradition, between the deeds of the ancient heroes who fought before Troy and Thebes and the fame of the warriors at Salamis. Aeschylus could honour both of them in his festival plays. The heroes of the Persian war could be sung in epic verse and the heroes of the present, such as Miltiades and Themistocles, could be hero-

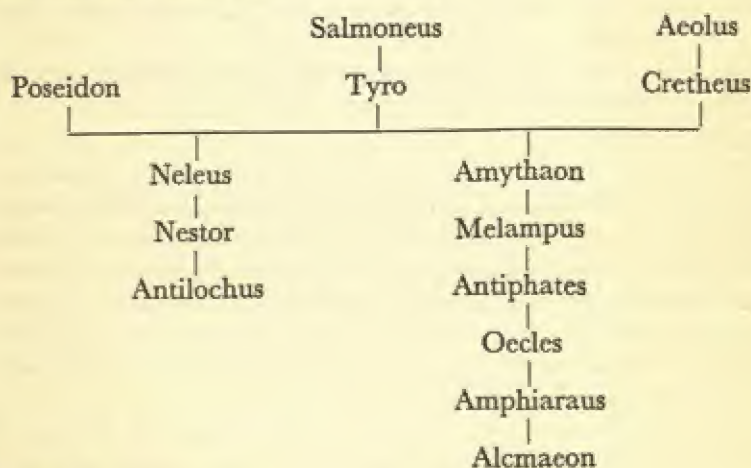
worshipped after their death. Moreover, since no one doubted the truth of the mythical tradition, this also, according to the belief of the Greeks, represented their distant past, and in consequence the historical writers at the turn of the sixth and fifth centuries seized upon these mythical traditions to portray the history of the Greeks in olden times. This was done by men like Hecataeus of Miletus, Acusilaus of Argos, Pherecydes of Athens, Hellanicus of Lesbos in the course of the fifth century. Their works have been lost to us but we possess enough fragments to obtain a picture of the activities and the intentions of the earliest historians, who are actually the first mythographers, in other words, portrayers of myths in prose. Hesiod had preceded them with his systematic editing of the myth in poetic form. He could be elaborated and part of his context transformed into prose. The myth became related pragmatically as history.

To do this a 'chronology' was needed, that is to say, an attempt had to be made to find a chronological sequence for the content of many sagas which were interspersed among the various epics. An aid to this was afforded by the genealogical trees of the heroes which had been partially given in the epic. Thus in the case of the race to which Nestor and Amphiaras belonged a family tree could be compiled through eight generations by merely taking the facts given in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Further support for the chronological order was available because all the heroes who, according to tradition, fought in the epic battle of Troy were contemporaries, just as were the seven heroes who fought against Thebes. Since the latter ranked as fathers of the heroes who took part in the Trojan war, they must have represented a generation after the expedition of the Seven. Furthermore, many of the fifth-century historians such as Hecataeus, could trace their family tree back to the mythical heroes almost without a single gap. In this way it was possible to create a kind of absolute chronology in which each generation was allotted a certain number of years. Hecataeus, for example, reckoned a generation as forty years. Now since his contemporary, the Spartan King Leonidas, who fell at Thermopylae, could trace his ancestors back to the founder of the race, Heracles, through twenty-one generations, we can by conversion to our Christian calendar set the date of Heracles as 1330-1290 B.C. From his

own age back to Io, the daughter of Inachus, Hecataeus could trace a sequence of thirty-three generations. These generation reckonings are also found in Aeschylus (*Prometheus*, 774), when he gives thirteen generations from Io to Heracles or when (*Prometheus*, 853) he gives five generations from Epaphus to the Danaids.

Thus Hecataeus dates the fall of Troy as about 1250 B.C., the Dorian migration *circa* 1170 and the Ionian migration about 1090. Later chronologists have given other dates. Eratosthenes, for example, dates the fall of Troy as 1184, and this date was accepted by many subsequent historians.

One of the main difficulties facing the genealogists consisted in correlating the different genealogical facts to be found in the epic tradition. The family trees of the hero races were not created merely with a view to following in sequence from the beginning, but were of quite different origin, occasionally contradicting each other and alternately containing more or fewer generations so that heroes who were contemporaries according to the epic tradition often appeared to be separated from each other by several generations on comparing the family trees. Thus we find in the genealogical facts given in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* such confusions that even the epic poets must have been aware of them. From various passages of the two epics we can compile the following family tree:



But according to tradition Antilochus the son of Nestor, took part in the Trojan war and Nestor, as a dotard, was present as a non-combatant. Amphiaraus, however, who according to the family tree lived in the third generation after Nestor, was one of the Seven against Thebes. And yet according to established tradition the expedition of the Seven took place a generation before the Trojan war, for Tydeus, one of the Seven, was the father of the Trojan warrior, Diomedes. Nevertheless, the epic poets found a solution to prolong the Nestor branch of the family tree and to antedate Nestor and his son to the Trojan war by allowing Nestor to live for three human generations, as Homer had already proclaimed in the *Iliad* (I. 250 et seq.). In this way a certain balance was achieved.

A difficult problem arose because one of the old epic poets who dates the marriage of Peleus with Thetis—whose offspring, Achilles, was the foremost hero of the Trojan war—at the beginning of the war and made the contest between the three goddesses, which was judged by Paris, take place at this marriage. The poet in question is the author of the *Cypria*. But since the judgment of Paris and the attendant rape of Helen was the cause of the war in which Achilles took part, and since in actual fact he was not born until after the strife between the goddesses, it was necessary somehow to fill out the fifteen years at least that must have passed between the marriage and the departure of the Greeks. In addition to this a son of Achilles, Neoptolemus, in the tenth year of the war after his father's death fought at Troy. How were all these discrepancies to be made good? The author of the *Iliad* already saw the difficulty when (XXIV. 765) he made Helen say in the tenth year of the war: 'Twenty years have passed since I was brought by Paris from my country to Ilium.' Thus between the rape of Helen and the beginning of the war ten years had elapsed. The poet of the *Cypria* allows the Greeks to stay with Anius for nine years on the island of Delos, and tells of a second massing of the Greek army in Aulis. In Apollodorus (*Chronicle*) we find an attempt to solve these chronological difficulties. Such examples of discrepancies and attempted equation could be quoted at great length.

The Greek historians, therefore, for the history of the period before the return of the Heraclids, had at their disposal a wealth

of material to serve as an historical source. In the following five centuries the tradition suddenly dried up almost completely both as regards facts and chronology. We, too, for the period until the end of the sixth century have very few, and to some extent contrived, dates at our disposal: the First Olympiad (776) and the same date for the beginning of the Spartan list of Ephors, the creation of the ten-year archontate in Athens and the founding of Rome (*ca.* 754/752), and in addition what Thucydides (IV. 3-6) tells us by way of chronological detail of the Greek colonies in the West. Not until the end of the fifth century is our tradition better and more coherent. Since for the first five hundred years after the Doric migration the Greeks had little historical data we must not accept, as they themselves believed, that it was any more reliable for the heroic age. This consideration should serve as a warning that we should not expect to find too much history in the myth.

For the later historians, too, the myth ranked as an historical source. Herodotus admittedly confined himself to the actual historical era which for him began for the Greeks in the year 700 as opposed to the age of the heroes which formed part of the history of the human race (III. 122). But for him, too, the Trojan war (II. 113 *et seq.*; VII. 20), the voyage of the Argonauts (VII. 193, 197), the war against the Amazons (IV. 110 *et seq.*) and the expedition of the Seven against Thebes (IX. 27) were historical facts, and Agamemnon, Menelaus, Ajax, Protesilaus, Minos, Sarpedon, Pandion, Theseus and others historical characters. Where Herodotus speaks of the first clashes between the Greeks and barbarians (I. 1-5) he relates in a rationalist pragmatic manner the stories of Io, Europa, Medea and Helen. The same applies to Thucydides, who wrote the history of his own age. In the introduction to his work, where he discusses the development of balance of power from the tiny beginnings of primitive times to the expansion at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, Minos takes the stage as the founder of a great sea power and Agamemnon as the commander of the largest army in existence before the Persian wars, and we learn that the Greeks called themselves Hellenes from Hellen, son of Deucalion.

Xenophon, too, to quote another example, speaks at the

beginning of his work on the chase of the discovery of this art by Apollo and Artemis, and of the worthy centaur, Chiron, who taught this particular art to the gods. He goes on to name twenty-one of this wise centaur's pupils, heroes of the mythical age, and relates how they distinguished themselves and were honoured by the gods. After this 'historical' survey he goes on with his own story.

Since the myths ranked as historical tradition it is no wonder that when historical examples from the past were to be invoked no difference was made between those of the actual historical era and those of the mythical age. The Greek orators subscribed to this because for them the myth was history. Thus Herodotus (IX. 27) makes an Athenian orator refer to the great deeds of his people: the Athenians had harboured the Heraclides when they fled before Eurystheus and conquered their pursuers. They had forced the Thebans to deliver the corpses of the fallen in the expedition of the Seven against Thebes for burial; they had fought with honour against the Amazons and before the walls of Troy, and in the same way they had rendered great service in the battle of Marathon.

We find similar passages in Isocrates and other orators of the fourth century. They practised their art, too, in speeches in praise of the heroes, and thus both Gorgias and his pupil, Isocrates, made a speech about Helen, while the latter also wrote a panegyric of King Busiris of Egypt, defending him and (XI. 37) pointing out the chronological impossibility that Heracles, the great-grandson of Perseus, could have met Busiris, the grandson of Epaphus, for eight generations lay between Busiris and Heracles.

If one considers the myth as the prehistory and relates it factually as historical tradition, one has also to rationalize all the miraculous elements. Thus Hecataeus treated the many-headed hound of Hell, Cerberus, as a poisonous snake which lived in the foothills of Taenarum. But an allegorical interpretation of the myth had been given to the hound of hell prior to this. In the second half of the sixth century, Theagenes of Rhegium explained the gods Apollo, Helios and Hephaestus as fire, Poseidon as water, Artemis as the moon, Hera as the air and he interprets the battle of the gods in the twentieth Book of

the *Iliad* as the conflict between the opposing elements. Metrodorus of Lampsacus, a pupil of the philosopher, Anaxagoras, saw in Agamemnon the ether, in Achilles the sun, in Hector the moon and in Paris and Helen the air and the earth. At a later date this allegorical explanation was fostered above all by the Stoics.

In addition to this there was an 'ethicizing' of the myth, in particular the exemplary behaviour of certain heroes such as Achilles, Nestor and Odysseus as a pattern of life (cf. Xenophon, *Symposium*, 4.6; Plato, *Hippias minor* 364 C). Heracles in particular now begins to develop into an ethical ideal, especially in the school of the Cynics, who had their Athenian classrooms at the shrine of this hero, and Antisthenes, the pupil of Socrates and founder of the Cynic philosophy, makes Heracles debate ethical problems in the Socratic manner with his teacher, the wise Chiron. In Xenophon's *Recollections of Socrates* (II. 1, 21 et seq.) we can read an account of Heracles at the crossroads which has found an echo in Wilhelm Meister's *Student Years* (I. 8).

The religious veneration which the Greeks felt for their gods and heroes did not prevent humour from creeping into the myths or that the gods and heroes should be ridiculed and occasionally allowed to laugh at themselves. Homer set this precedent and a later proof is the Epic of the War of the Frogs and the Mice, a parody of the heroic battles before Troy in which Aristophanes mocked the gods as outspokenly as he mocked the great statesmen and military leaders of his own age. In the *Frogs* Dionysus was ridiculed, Heracles became a popular figure of fun; the saga of Odysseus and Polyphemus, like many other sagas, became the subject of satire, and humorous episodes taken from the Homeric hymn to Hermes were also transformed by Sophocles into a satire. In these plays, which were performed at the end of the tragic trilogy, the chorus of Satyrs, the singing goats, the gay train of Dionysus led by Father Silenus, appeared on the stage and with their songs and jests acted as an orchestral accompaniment to the myths. A few years later, however, Plato warned the Athenians (*Republic*, III. 388 C) not to love mockery too much. 'We should not allow writers to make fun of outstanding men and of the gods', he maintained, and

it was deplorable that Homer should say of the Gods (*Iliad* I. 599):

And quenchless laughter among the Immortals arose
When they saw Hephaestus bustling about in the hall.

Iliad I. 599

Herder held quite a different opinion of this 'adventurous monastic pomposity' in his *Kritische Wälder* (II. 3), insisting that the carping pupil of Socrates was showing off and that in modern times the caricatures of a Daumier, a Doré or an Offenbach did no possible harm to the Greek gods and heroes. Something as human as the Grecian gods cannot be damaged by laughter but only by a boring type of seriousness.

With the *Frogs* of Aristophanes and the deaths of Euripides and Sophocles we come to the end of the fifth century. Already the myth had clearly been subjected to the movement that invariably occurs in every religious development—I call it the centrifugal movement—which leads gradually but naturally to 'a loss of the mean' and to which the historian cannot take exception. It reveals itself in profanation, secularization, the familiarizing of religious phenomena; religious rites become profane customs, as can be observed in the development of the dance, the masque or performance on the stage. As a result the myth leaves the religious sphere and becomes a mundane story which is the case in many of the tragedies of Euripides. Here the heroes on the stage discuss modern problems of philosophy or politics; they are brought more and more into the light of day and divested of their mythical aura. The heroes are rationalized and assessed by historians. In this way the epic, originally a religious poem, leaves its sacred precincts and enters the realm of literature and aesthetics. It no longer served at religious festivals, as in Athens at the Panathenaea, to be declaimed by rhapsodists. Plato actually banned the Homeric epic from his ideal state because Homer treated the gods in an immoral and untrue manner: for Aristotle the epic was merely literature.

For Plato in particular (*Republic*, II. 377 et seq.) the myths as told by the poets were unacceptable. He refused to give credence to the sagas of Uranus and Cronus, to the enchainment of Hera, the fall from heaven of Hephaestus, to the battles of the gods and

the family quarrels of the heroes as described by the poets. The writer had to portray the gods as they really were, as good and as the origin of good, and he must never show them as the instigators of evil and suffering. In his ideal state only such verses would have their place which represented hymns to the gods and panegyrics to outstanding men (*Republic*, X. 607 A). In this way Plato denigrated the Greek myth and also the ancient Hellenic poetry just as he denied the validity of the life of this world except in the light of his ideas of the transcendental world.

We must examine here the later period of myth relation, since its products cannot be ignored despite our marked preference for going to the fountain-head for our study. Many legends, which have only become familiar to us from later literature, were referred to in the older literature or proved by the plastic arts to have belonged to the ancient thesaurus of myths. It is perhaps of value at this juncture to show the part that the Greek myths played in later literature, even in Roman times.

In the Hellenistic period, i.e. the period from Alexander the Great to Augustus, the poet turned scholar. He eagerly seized upon lesser-known material representing local tradition, in particular etiological legends which explained the origin of a custom, the justification for a festival or a cult, for the founding of a city, the explanation of some god or hero's name, or a natural phenomenon from the mythological tradition. Callimachus, the custodian of the newly formed library at Alexandria, composed his anthology of etiological legends (*Aetia*), of which we possess only fragments, and Apollonius Rhodius wrote his Argonaut epic in four books introducing many local legends connected with the Argonauts. Lycophron in his *Alexandra* recounts the prophecy of Priam's daughter, Cassandra, which she uttered when her brother, Paris, left Sparta, foretelling the future destruction of Troy, the fate of the heroes and the contest between Europe and Asia. This poem gives us the first account of many of the further wanderings to the west of heroes, such as Diomedes and Idomeneus, after the fall of Troy. From the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. has survived the epic of Quintus of Smyrna in which, as an appendix to the *Iliad*, the events of the Trojan war up to the destruction of the city and the depart-

ure of the heroes are related. In addition, up to the beginning of the *Odyssey* we have the little epic of Tryphiodorus on the sack of Troy and of Colluthus on the abduction of Helen, and in particular the great epic of Nonnus in forty-eight books on the voyage of Dionysus to India.

Simultaneous with the secularization of the myths was their novelization, i.e. the extraction from the main body of the myths striking episodes which were retold in the form of short stories. Local traditions could be incorporated in these. This procedure was very common in the Hellenistic age. Of this literature we possess today the collection of love stories by Parthenius, who compiled them for his friend, Cornelius Gallus, about the middle of the first century A.D. But such mythical tales—a travesty of the mythical material—had already been produced on the stage by the comedians in the fourth century B.C., an example of which we find in the Latin tongue in the *Amphitruo* of Plautus. Here the same theme is treated as in the medieval Easter play, *The Cuckold Joseph*. A mythological love story with comedy features is the story of Cupid and Psyche, told for entertainment in the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius. Alcmena and Psyche are treated as mortal women loved by a god, who appears incognito and subsequently deified. Individual legends were also collected and published from other viewpoints, as, for example, the little book of Conon, contemporary with the birth of Christ, and the metamorphosis legends compiled by Antoninus Liberalis in the first century A.D. based largely on a poem by Nicander. Many legends are known to us only through these Hellenistic authors—here we must also mention the elegies of Hermesianax—and it is certain that some of them stem from the old tradition.

In the Hellenistic age there was a systematic collection and expansion of star legends—an enhanced endowment of the stars with myths. Some *Catasterismae*, i.e. the translation of mythical characters to the sky as stars, are already known in the Homeric epic, to mention only the constellations of the Bear, Bootes, Orion, the Pleiades, the Hyades, Sirius and Orion's dog. In a didactic poem of the Hesiodic School the creation of these constellations was explained by myths. In the subsequent ages these star myths increased and in the Hellenistic age Aratus and Eratosthenes systematically collected these traditions.

From the first century A.D. we possess a manual of Greek mythology, the so-called *Bibliothēke*, attributed to Apollodorus. This is the only complete account of the Greek myths told in a systematic genealogical-chronological order from Uranus and Ge to the death of Odysseus and the return of the Heraclids which has come down to us from antiquity. The general genealogical tree upon which it is based is given in our appendix, No. XXV. It differs in certain details from the other genealogical trees in the appendix.

Pseudo-Apollodorus begins with the cosmogony and theogony (I. 1-44), then in sequence the issue of the Iapetid Prometheus (I. 45-147), the descendants of the Oceanid, Inachus, to Libya (II. 1-10), then the issue of Libya, the Belids (II. 11-180) and the Agenorids (III. 10-95) and the race of Pelasgus (III. 96-180) and the Agenorids (III. 10-95) and the race of Pelasgus (III. 96-109). These are followed by the issue of the Iapetid Atlas (III. 110-155) and the Oceanid Asopus (III. 156-170). Thus all the races who could trace their family trees back to Uranus and Ge are represented. Finally we come to the Attic hero races from Cecrops and Cranaus who both sprung from the soil to Theseus. In the middle of the story of Theseus the manuscript breaks off, and to close the work we have the *Epitome*, which continues with the description of Theseus (*Epitome*, I) and then after a digression to the Tantalids (*Epitome*, II) followed by a description of the Trojan war and the return of the heroes to the death of Odysseus (*Epitome*, 3-7). By and large the context of this manual was based on sources prior to the fourth century B.C.—on Homer, the Epic cycle and Hesiod, the lyric and tragic poets, and the ancient Greek mythographers. The author of this work naturally could not consult the original but has used extracts from them and commentaries which gave him an easy access to the mythological material; with the aid of the family trees the mythological stories have been given in chronological order. This arrangement is basically correct and conforms to the precedent set by the ancient Greek historian, Hecataeus. As further sources of this work also belong extracts from an old epic from a later date, which has survived in a shortened form in the writings of the Neo-Platonist, Procius. These passages and extracts were also at the disposal of the

artists who, from the third century B.C. onwards, adorned the so-called Homeric beakers and, in the early days of the emperors, the *Tabulae Iliacae* with mythological scenes and whose creations together with the excerpts from Proclus and the descriptions of Pseudo-Apollodorus are of considerable aid to us in bringing the content of the old epics up to date. And in the same way as the old epics, the tragedies of the fifth century were excerpted for their mythological content and the legendary figures of the tragic poets were combined to give a new overall picture of the myth. This was done by a pupil of Isocrates, Asclepiades of Tragilus, who produced a mythological manual which has not survived.

In this late period, too, the content of the myth ranked as historical tradition, and thus in the first century B.C., Diodorus, who wrote a history of the world ending at his own age, started his book with the creation of the world and gave an account of the gods and heroes on the basis of mythological tradition. In doing so and in his concept of the gods he subscribed to the theory advanced by Euhemerus in the third century, according to which the gods had once been the earliest men, who, on account of great deeds and services, had become deified. As a result even the tales of the gods have been treated rationally, Uranus, Cronus and Zeus becoming representatives of a human ruling dynasty.

The Greek myths were known at a very early date to the Romans, who invented their own gods on Hellenic lines, Jupiter representing Zeus, Juno Hera, Minerva Athene, Mercury Hermes, Venus Aphrodite, Diana Artemis, Mars Ares, Neptune Poseidon, Vulcan Hephaestus, Saturn Cronus, Ceres Demeter and Vesta Hestia. . . . The Romans venerated these and many other deities in their state worship but they possessed no ancient autochthonous legends, nor were their gods, as they were among the Greeks, related by family connections; they were never given individual personalities nor had the Romans any hero worship or hero legends. No indigenous epic evolved among them corresponding to the Homeric epics of the Greeks and no native tragedies, such as were born on ancient Attic soil. Their forms of poetry were taken from the Greek and also a greater part of the material treated in it from the hero sagas. For the Romans these

epics, tragedies and myths could never have the religious significance they had for the Greeks, since for them the Greek heroes were not their own ancestors and were never worshipped by them in the form of a cult. For the Romans the Greek myths were pure literature and they possessed no mythology of their own.

In the third century the Romans learned of the *Odyssey* and the Greek tragedies with their mythological content through the adaptations of Livius Andronicus, and in future the Greek myths were familiar to all cultured Romans. Roman poets exploited them fully, even introducing their own Roman prehistory into the framework of the Greek myths. The Trojan, Aeneas, after the destruction of Troy, was credited with migrating and settling in Latium; thus Ilium was transplanted to Rome. Many Roman families traced their family tree back to the migrating Trojans. Virgil in his *Aeneid* presented the Romans with a national epic in which he related the wanderings of the heroes and their settlement in Latium after stubborn battles. A contemporary of Virgil, Ovid, composed his *Metamorphoses* and his *Ars Amatoria*, describing the lives of heroines and heroes.

In the *Metamorphoses*, a full-length epic in Latin hexameters, Ovid has used much of the old Hellenistic wealth of legends arranged in chronological order. The Latin poet opens with the creation of the world, continues with the oldest human races and relates all the metamorphoses to be found in Greek mythology until Aeneas and Roman prehistory, ending with the apotheosis of Caesar in his own age. To relate so many individual legends and maintain a chronological order the poet used every available source to lead him through the maze and the result is a mythological manual very similar to that of Pseudo-Apollodorus. A similar manual is the book of fables by Hyginus, also dating from the second century B.C. It is a collection of Greek sagas in prose also very similar in its scheme and content to the work of Pseudo-Apollodorus, based throughout on Greek sources and particularly influenced by the tragedies.

From the post-Augustinian age we still possess a few poems in the Latin tongue with a mythological content. We shall name four epic poems of the first century A.D.—the *Thebaid* of Statius, a description of the expedition of the Seven against Thebes, his

Achilleid, the beginnings of a life of Achilles, the Argonaut epic of Valerius Flaccus and the so-called *Ilias Latina* which is a shortened version of the Homeric *Iliad*. From the same period we also possess nine tragedies by Seneca dealing with mythological subjects in which his Stoic philosophy is expressed: *Hercules Furens*, *Trojan Women*, *Phoenissae*, *Medea*, *Phaedra*, *Oedipus*, *Agamemnon*, *Thyestes* and *Hercules Oetaeus*. Particularly in the last-named tragedy, Heracles fighting and suffering for mankind on the orders of his divine father is extolled as the Stoic ideal. Finally at the end of the fourth century we must mention the epic by Claudianus on the Rape of Proserpina and an uncompleted *Gigantomachia*.

From the same century originates a prose description of the Trojan war attributed to Dictys Cretensis which purports to be an eye-witness account by a participant in the war. Another shorter history of the fate of Troy was accredited to Dares, in Homer's *Iliad* a Trojan priest of Hephaestus. This dates from the fifth century A.D. At the beginning of the sixth century appeared a rather confused allegorical collection of myth interpretations by Fulgentius; it was very popular in the Middle Ages and was used in the anthology of myths of the three so-called *Mythographi Vaticani* read by Petrarch and Boccaccio.

These then are the most important literary sources for our knowledge of the Greek myths. They also show us the incredible capacity for transformation of the myths which over a period of about two thousand years constantly assumed new shape; in the time of the Roman emperors this power of myth creation did not die. Naturally we know myths only in the form given to us by the poets. Frequently they appear in literature only after having been subjected to a multiple transformation. Since the original legend was related orally in its archaic form it is no longer possible to state with accuracy when and how it originated.

PART ONE

The Creation of the World and the Gods

THE POWERS AND NATURE OF THE PRIMEVAL AGE

IN the beginning was chaos, infinite space, the yawning void. And Ge, the broad-bosomed earth, was born, and Eros, the most beautiful of the immortals, who rules the heads and hearts of god and men. From chaos emerged Erebus, the darkness under the earth, and Nyx, the pitch-black night. And then it was light; Nyx bore to Erebus Aether, the light, and Hemera, the day. Ge created Uranus, the sky, so that he might encompass her and be in future the secure residence of the gods, and she also created the tall mountains and Pontus, the foaming sea. After this Ge, joining in love with Uranus, gave birth to the twelve Titans: six males, Oceanus, Coeus, Crius, Hyperion, Iapetus, Cronus, and six giantesses, Theia, Rhea, Themis, Mnemosyne, Phoebe and Tethys; the youngest of these was Cronus, the most terrifying of her children, who was filled with hatred against his father.

In addition to this, Ge gave birth to the three brutal Cyclopes which resembled the gods in every respect except that they had one eye in the centre of their foreheads. They were subtle and full of invention. Later they forged the thunderbolt and the lightning flash for Zeus. Their names were Brontes, Steropes and Arges. And finally from the union of Uranus and Ge three monsters were born: the hundred-handed giants (Hecatoncheires), Cottus, Briareus and Gyes. Each possessed a hundred arms and fifty hands. Their power was terrifying and their size overpowering.

The universal Mother Earth, venerable and solid, inspired a poet to write:

'Of all-mother Earth will I sing, on enduring foundations who stands,
Eldest of beings, who nourisheth all things throughout all lands,
Yea, all things that walk this goodly earth, that swim in the sea;
That fly in the air—all feed on the bounty bestowed of thee.
Fair children by thee are given, all-golden harvests shine,
O Queen! Unto mortals to grant life-sustenance is thine,
And to take it away. Oh, blessed is he whom it is thy pleasure
To honour! On him all boons are bestowed in stintless measure;
His food-bearing fields are heavy with harvests, his pastures abound
With cattle, and wealth of all good things in his dwelling is found.
In righteousness such men rule over cities whose women are fair:
Great their prosperity is; they have riches enough and to spare:
Their sons are exultant in gladness of heart new-born each day;
Their daughters in garlanded dances with blithesome spirits play
And lightly as fawns trip over the soft-faced flowers of the lea.
Such are they that be honoured, O holy and boundless Goddess, of thee.
All hail to thee, Mother of Gods, the star-studded Heaven's bride!'

Homeric Hymn to Earth, the Mother of All

URANUS

URANUS hated all his children from the very moment Ge bore them, and each time one came into the world he plunged it back into the womb of the Earth never allowing it to see the light of day. The mother was sore distressed and decided to resort to cunning. She prepared a huge iron sickle and made

ready to take her revenge with her children. But they were all afraid. Cronus alone plucked up enough courage to perform the rash deed. Ge placed the sickle in his hand, hid him and showed him how the deed was to be accomplished. When Uranus approached his wife that night, Cronus seized the sickle, castrated his father and threw the severed member far over his shoulder. The blood dripped on to the Earth and in the course of time Ge, pregnant once more, gave birth to the mighty Erinyes, the giants and the Naiads, from whom later the men of the Iron Age originated. But Uranus' member fell into the sea and from the foam that spurted round it was born a girl child, Aphrodite, later to be known as 'she who was born from the foam'. The girl went immediately to the island of Cythera and thence to Cyprus; flowers blossomed everywhere her feet trod. Eros (Love) and Himerus (Longing) followed her when she joined the heavenly host. Her office with gods and men is the intoxicating smile, sweet pleasure and the diversions of love.

Of Eros, her companion, a poet sings:

'Love in every battle victor crowned,
 Love rushing on thy prey.
 Now on a maiden's soft and blooming cheek
 In secret ambush hid;
 Now o'er the broad sea wandering at will
 And now in shepherds' folds;
 Of all the Undying Ones none 'scape from thee,
 Nor yet of mortal men
 Whose lives are measured as a fleeting day;
 And who has thee is frenzied in his soul.'

Sophocles: *Antigone*. Song of Eros

But the castrated Uranus called his children Titans and prophesied that they would pay the penalty for their sacrilege.

THE CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT

A DAUGHTER of Nyx, the night, was Eris (Strife). At first she was small in stature but gradually she assumed gigantic proportions, raising her head to the sky, towering above the earth,

spreading hatred among mankind. Zeus sent her to the ships of the Greeks off Troy, holding the disastrous symbol of war in her hands. Her eerie scream filled the breasts of men with strength and lust for fighting, so that war appeared sweeter to them than their return home. While the battle raged she alone of the gods looked with pleasure upon her handiwork, the result of her insatiable greed. She also disrupted the marriage feast in Chiron's cave, sowing strife among the goddesses who, on the advice of Zeus, played a murderous part in the war for the possession of Troy.

Another daughter of Night and Uranus was Lyssa (Madness). She was sent by the gods to men to disturb their spirits and to encourage them to commit dreadful deeds. Hera sent her to Heracles, whom she hated, to incite him into a mad rage so that he killed his own children. Let us hear the Goddess of Madness speak in her own words:

'On will I; nor sea nor moaning surges hurl such ruin-wrack.
No, nor earthquake, no nor madding thunders gasping
agonies,
As the fury of mine onrush to the breast of Heracles.
I will rive his roofs, will swoop adown his halls:—his children
first
I will slay; nor shall the murderer know how he slakes his
murder-thirst
On the children of his body, till my madness' course is run.
See him—lo, his head he tosses in the fearful race begun!
See his gorgon-glaring eyeballs all in silence wildly rolled!
Like a bull in act to charge, with fiery pantings uncontrolled
Awfully he bellows, howling to the fateful fiends of Hell!
Wilder yet shall be thy dance, as peals my pipe's appalling
knell!'

Euripides: *The Madness of Heracles*

Driven out of his mind and intoxicated by this gruesome paeon the hero killed his children.

Progeny of the Night were also the Hesperides who guarded the Golden Apples on the shores of Oceanus in the far west, Thanatos (Death), Hypnos (Sleep) and the Host of Dreams. Naturally the dreams which came to men were often disturbed

and difficult to interpret. Not always did they fulfil their promise. For there were two doors through which the dreams could pass, one made of horn and the other of ivory. And the dreams which appeared through the ivory door disappointed and were not fulfilled, but those which came through the gate of horn spoke the truth.

THE ERINYES

ONE of the many children of Eris was Horcus, the Oath, who harassed perjurers, the punitive companion of outraged justice. At his birth he was nursed by the Erinyes. These Furies were born from the blood of the castrated Uranus which fell upon the earth. They lived in the underworld and punished in particular parricides and matricides. We are told: when the hero, Meleager, killed his maternal uncles, his mother cursed him; weeping bitterly, on her knees she beat the earth with her hands, calling upon Hades and Persephone to kill her son. The Erinyes in the underworld, who could never be appeased, heard her cry and Meleager fell in battle. In Thebes, too, once upon a time, the beautiful Jocasta unwittingly married her son, Oedipus, after he had killed his father. But the gods revealed the fact. Oedipus, the ruler of Thebes, was pursued by misfortune—this was the will of the gods—and his mother killed herself. He suffered so greatly from remorse that the Erinyes pursued him on his mother's account as well.

In this way the Furies watched and saw that justice prevailed. The man who committed no sacrilege was spared their anger and could spend his life in peace. But to anyone laden with guilt and with blood on his hands they appeared as avengers. Trusty witnesses for the dead man, they demanded the blood of the murderer and pursued him until the earth swallowed him up. Even in death he was not free of them.

Thus it was the duty of the Erinyes to see that the laws were duly observed. Of the daughters of Pandareus it is told: when they lost their parents the gods took them in as wards. Aphrodite fed them on milk, honey and wine; Hera bestowed upon them beauty and wisdom; Artemis noble stature and Athene taught

them embroidery. But when Aphrodite went to Olympus to beg Zeus for a happy marriage for them the maidens, on the orders of the all-powerful Zeus, who knew what was good for humans, were carried off by the harpies and given over to the Erinyes because they had exceeded the human standards of happiness.

These harpies, two in number, were the daughters of Thaumus, a son of the sea and the earth, and their mother was the Oceanid Electra. They were the winged spirits of the storm who vied with the winds and the birds, sent by Zeus to punish human beings, and their sister was Iris, swift as the wind, the winged messenger of the gods. As snow or hail flees from the clouds when they are whipped by the stormy north wind, Iris sped on her way when Zeus gave her an order.

NEREUS, THE NEREIDS AND OTHER SEA GODS

FROM Pontus, the Sea, was born Nereus, also a sea god, known as the Old Man of the Sea—the mild, wise counsellor, the upright soothsayer, who spoke the words: ‘The enemy, too, must be praised with a generous heart when he has accomplished a worthy deed.’ He guided Heracles on his journey to fetch the golden apples of the Hesperides. The hero had to overpower him, of course, at the outset, and during this wrestling bout the sea god transformed himself into all manner of shapes. Living at the bottom of the sea he enjoyed the company of his fifty daughters, the Nereids, whom his wife, Doris, the daughter of Oceanus, had borne him. Many of these daughters became famous as a result of their marriages and their issue, particularly Thetis. She was raised by Hera and enjoyed the love and respect of Zeus because she supported him during the revolt of the gods and sent Briareus to his aid. Against her own wishes, however, Zeus married her to a mortal, Peleus, a favourite of the gods. All the gods came to the wedding and bestowed rich gifts on Peleus, weapons later carried by his son, Achilles, at Troy and the immortal horses which drew the hero’s chariot. But Thetis had no joy of this marriage which had been forced upon her. Her husband grew old while she possessed eternal youth, and their

only son, Achilles, was destined to die in his prime. The gods denied Peleus further issue, although, in other respects, he enjoyed their favours. Thus this marriage with a mortal for the goddess of the sea was but a mere interlude which subsequently she did not care to recall since it was a reproach against the gods.

It is also related that Zeus and Poseidon had vied for the love of Thetis but had retired on account of the prophesy of Themis that Thetis would give birth to a son who would be stronger than his father, but if she shared her bed with a mortal she would see her son fall in battle although he was as strong as Ares and swift as the lightning. So the Nereid became the wife of Peleus. Other versions maintain that the latter had to wrestle with the mermaid; before he possessed her she had been evasive and capricious as the waves of the sea, her home, constantly changing herself into new shapes, a lion, a snake, fire and water. The marriage took place on Pelion in the cave of the centaur, Chiron, in the presence of all the gods.

Thetis abandoned the ageing Peleus as soon as her son left for Troy and returned to her father, the Old Man of the Sea, at the bottom of the ocean. But she kept in touch with her son, who always invoked her when in distress.

A sister of Thetis, the Nereid Psamathe, also married a mortal, Aeacus, himself a son of Zeus and King of Aegina, and she bore him Phocus. But like Achilles he, too, died in his youth.

A third Nereid was Amphitrite, the wife of the ruler of the sea, Poseidon, who presented him with the Triton, the fish-scaled sea god who lived in the sea with his parents in a golden palace. Another Nereid, however, Galatea, dallied with Polyphemus, the shepherd Cyclops. But whether she finally surrendered to him cannot be said for certain.

Oceanus and Thetis had grandchildren and a large issue, apart from the Nereids. From them originated all streams and rivers, three thousand sons and as many daughters. Two of them as founders of famous hero races were particularly famous: Inachus, the river god of Argolis, and Asopus, who gave their names to a river in Boeotia and in the Northern Peloponnese respectively. We must mention, too, Scamander, who was known to the gods as Xanthus, the river god in the Troad whose sorrows at the hands of Achilles Homer relates with great pathos.

The eldest was called Achelous, the river god of Acarnania, with whom Heracles had to wrestle.

Another god of the sea was Glaucus. Originally he was a fisherman in Anthedon who noticed one day how the fishes came to life again on the shore after they had come in contact with a certain plant. He proceeded to eat some of this miracle-working herb and became immortal, plunged into the sea and became a sea god, also known as the Old Man of the Sea. He, too, possessed the gift of prophecy. The same applied to Proteus, the sea god who lived on the island of Pharos on the Egyptian coast and of whom we shall hear again later in connection with Menelaus.

From Pontus, the Sea, the father of Nereus, also originated Phorcys and Ceto, two monsters born to him by Ge.

THE ISSUE OF PHORCYS AND CETO

MANY of the monsters and semi-human monsters born in primeval times had to fight at a later date with humans. They were all the issue of the Old Man of the Sea, Phorcys, and Ceto, including the two old crones, the Graiae, who were grey from birth, and their sisters, the Three Gorgons, who lived in the garden of the Hesperides beyond the Ocean. To them came the hero Perseus, to fetch the head of the Gorgon Medusa. Medusa was the only mortal among her sisters and had given her love to Poseidon. But when Perseus cut off her head two creatures emerged from her trunk, the winged horse, Pegasus, and the powerful Chrysaor. Pegasus flew off to Olympus and carried the thunder and lightning of Zeus. Chrysaor married Callirrhoe, the daughter of Oceanus, and their son was Geryon, the triple-bodied giant later killed by Heracles for the possession of his herds.

Other monsters, the offspring of Phorcys and Ceto, were the dragon, which in a dark cave guarded the Apples of the Hesperides and was killed by Heracles, and the sinister Echidna, an immortal creature resembling neither god nor man, half-maiden, half-snake, bright coloured and gluttonous, living in a cave remote from gods and men in the land of the Arimi. She

mated with the giant, Typhaon, and bore him Orthus, a hound which watched the herds of the shepherd giant, Geryon, the five-headed hound of hell, Cerberus, a water-snake (the Hydra) later killed by Heracles, and the fire-spitting Chimaera—which had three heads, one of a lion, one a goat and one a serpent. A daughter of Chimaera and Orthus was the Sphinx sent to destroy the Thebans, a son of the Nemean lion which was strangled by Heracles. The Cyclops, Polyphemus, could trace his family tree back to Phorcys since his mother, Thoosa, was a daughter of a sea monster and his father the sea god, Poseidon.

SELENE, HELIOS AND EOS

THE children of the Titans, Hyperion and Theia, were Selene (the Moon), Helios (the Sun) and Eos (the Dawn).

When Selene rose from the ocean in her chariot after bathing in the sea she bestowed her radiance on the earth. Helios, too, the god who saw and heard everything, drove his gleaming chariot out of the ocean, returning at nightfall to Oceanus in the west and during the night carrying the golden beaker, forged by Hephaestus, swiftly round the waters of the globe to the east to bring a new day. This is how the poet, Mimnermus, sings of him.

‘An arduous task is the lot of Helios.
He may not curb his steeds once Eos
rises rose-fingered from the ocean waves.
He drives them high in the arched sky
spanned to the costly gold chariot
fashioned by Hephaestus to the land of
the Ethiopians, where he rests until once more
Eos heralds a new dawn.’

Mimnermus: Frag. 10

The herds of the sun god grazed on the island of Trinacria; sheep and oxen, guarded by his daughters, Phaëtusa and Lampetia, seven shepherds and seven cowherds each with fifty beasts which produced no young but never decreased in numbers. When the companions of Odysseus, in spite of being warned,

slaughtered and consumed some of these beasts contrary to the orders of Odysseus, they observed an ominous sign: the hides of the slaughtered cattle crawled about on the ground and from the meat that hung on the spit came a noise like the bellowing of kine. When Helios learned of this sacrilege from his daughter, he was furious and threatened Zeus that he would go down into Hades and in future light the underworld unless he received some compensation. Zeus consoled him and promised revenge on the vandals. The ship of Odysseus was smashed to pieces in the sea and his crew was drowned.

Perseis, the daughter of Oceanus, bore Helios two children, Circe the Enchantress, who lived on the Island of Aeaëa where later she was visited by Odysseus, and Aeëtes, the ruler of Colchis on the Black Sea. Aeëtes married Idyia and their daughter was Medea, who practised magic and seduced Jason, the leader of the Argonauts, who carried her off as his wife to Iolcus.

Another son of Helios was Phaethon. One day with the help of his sisters, the Heliads, the boy climbed into his father's sun chariot and drove it across the sky. But the beasts were too spirited and an enormous conflagration broke out when he approached too near to the earth. Upon seeing this, Zeus hurled a thunderbolt and Phaeton crashed to earth and fell in the Eridanus. His sisters mourned their brother's death and were changed into poplars; their tears were amber. To extinguish the conflagration on earth Zeus sent a flood in which all the human race was drowned with the exception of Deucalion and Pyrrha.

Helios' second son was Augeas, the wealthy ruler of Elis, renowned for his herds of cattle whose dung Heracles was to cleanse from his stables. On that occasion there was a quarrel as regards payment, which was not forthcoming, and Phyleus, the son of Augeas, testified against his father. He was exiled and wandered to Dulichion; his son, Meges, took part in the Trojan war. The eldest daughter of Augeas was Agamede, an expert in healing herbs. She married Muliüs, who killed young Nestor in the battle of the Pylans against the Epeians.

In order to safeguard his great wealth, Augeas summoned the famous builders, Trophonius and Agamedes, who had built the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, and ordered them to build him a huge treasure chamber. They carried out his commission but

left a loose stone in the wall so that it could be removed at any time. Time after time they crawled through this opening when they wanted a little treasure. But Augeas laid a trap and caught Agamedes. Trophonius, however, cut off his head and hid it so that the dead man would not be recognized and suspicion fall on himself as an accomplice. Then he left the land. But at the prayer of Augeas he was swallowed up by the earth at Labadea in Boeotia. Later the shrine of a famous oracle stood at the spot.

Eos, the Dawn, had numerous love affairs with mortals. She lived in the east at Aeaea on the edge of the ocean. She ravished more than one handsome youth and made him her lover; for example, Clitus, the son of Mantius and grandson of Melampus, she took to herself for his beauty so that he could dwell among the gods. We know nothing of his ultimate fate. She also took to herself the handsome Orion, until Artemis killed him with her arrows. She drove Cephalus crazy with love and bore him a son whom she called Phaethon, the radiant, the god-like youth whom Aphrodite ravished and promoted to be the custodian of her temple. Eos became enamoured of Tithonus, the son of the Trojan, Laomedon, Priam's brother, and implored Zeus to grant him immortality. The father of Heaven granted her plea, but Eos had forgotten also to ask eternal youth for her lover. They lived happily together on the waves of the ocean at the end of the earth until old age descended upon Tithonus and his hair turned white and he began to shrink. The goddess continued to feed him with ambrosia and dressed him in beautiful garments but he drew ever older until he could hardly move his limbs. Then she shut him in her apartments where he continued to live, but his voice and strength were gone. From Eos and Tithonus were descended Memnon, the Prince of the Ethiopians, who fell at the hands of Achilles outside the walls of Troy, and Emathion, whom Heracles killed in Ethiopia.

CRONUS AND ZEUS

AFTER the castration of Uranus, Cronus ruled the world. But on his head and on those of his brothers and sisters lay the burden of the crime he had committed against his father. Cronus married

Rhea, his sister, who bore him six children: Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Hades, Poseidon and Zeus. But his parents Uranus and Ge had prophesied that he would be overthrown by one of his sons. After this he devoured each child as soon as it was born so that no one should ever be able to take the throne from him. But Rhea in her pregnancy before the birth of Zeus went to her parents for advice. They sent her to the island of Crete where Zeus was born and hidden in a cave on the northern slope of Mount Ida. Rhea handed Cronus a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes and, falling for the ruse, he swallowed it greedily in place of the child.

Zeus was brought up in his cave on Mount Dicte, suckled by the goat, Amalthea. His baby cries were drowned by the Curetes clanging their weapons. Later Zeus took the pelt of this goat because it was invulnerable and used it as a shield in his war against the Titans. This was the Aegis which in a later age was adorned with the head of the Gorgon, Medusa. Amalthea's horns, too, had magic powers so that anyone who possessed them never lacked for food and drink.

When Zeus came to manhood, Cronus, outwitted by the advice of Ge—she had given him an emetic—spewed up the children he had devoured, including the stone he had swallowed instead of Zeus and which the latter now placed as a memorial in Delphi. Zeus also freed his father's brothers and sisters whom Uranus had hurled into the depths of the earth, and in their gratitude they presented him with the thunder and the lightning.

THE BATTLE OF THE TITANS

BUT strife soon broke out between the young gods, Zeus and his brothers and sisters, and the older gods, the Titans, children of Uranus and Ge. The hundred-handed giants, Cottus, Briareus and Gyes, whom Uranus after their birth had hidden in the bowels of the earth, were freed by the Cronids and brought into the light on the advice of Ge, who announced to the gods that with the aid of the giants they would be victorious and acquire great fame. For ten years the battle raged between the gods from Olympus and their adversaries, the Titans, who had taken

up their position on the Othrys, and no end to this war could be foreseen. Then Zeus summoned the hundred-handed giants and reminded them of the friendship they had received at the hands of the gods in being given their freedom and proposed that they should measure their strength against the Titans. The hundred-handed monsters obeyed his summons and engaged in furious battle with the Titans. They flung three hundred boulders at the enemy and buried them beneath this ammunition. In this way the Titans were conquered and bound with strong chains in Tartarus.

TYPHAON

WHEN Zeus had hurled the Titans from heaven, Ge bore to Tartarus the powerful giant, Typhaon, from whose shoulders a hundred dragons' heads sprouted. Flames flashed from his eyes and from his jaws voices emerged, sometimes intelligible to the gods, sometimes resembling the roaring of a lion or a bull, the baying of a hound, or a hissing and whistling that echoed in the mountains. But Zeus perceived the monster in time and with thunder and lightning attacked its spray of fire. Sky, earth and sea were filled with heat; Hades, the ruler of the dead, and the Titans in the depths trembled and the earth began to melt. In the fray Zeus burnt off the heads of his adversary and flung his body into the abyss of Tartarus. Typhaon had lived in the caves of Arima in Cilicia where the Echidna also dwelt and with this monster produced many strange progeny. In Sicily, where Aetna erupted and the red-hot lava streamed down to the valleys, the inhabitants maintained that it was Typhaon spitting out his fiery streams.

THE WINDS

FROM Typhaon stemmed the damp, swirling winds which blew across the sea and were of no service to man, bringing appalling storms and fog to disperse ships and encompass the death of seamen, while on the mainland they destroyed houses and wreaked great damage. On the other hand the good winds which were of

service to man stemmed from the gods—from Eos, the Dawn, and the Titan son, Astraeus. Their names were Boreas (the North Wind), Notus (the South Wind), Zephyrus (the West Wind) and Eurus (the East Wind). They, too, were wild creatures not created to associate with gentle maidens. Homer tells us: When the funeral pyre which Achilles had erected for his friend, Patroclus, would not burn he called upon Boreas and Zephyrus with prayers, offerings and oaths to kindle the fire with their breath. Iris, the messenger of the gods, heard his prayer and sped to the dwelling place of Zephyrus where the winds sat at table. When the goddess crossed the threshold they all leaped up from their seats and each one invited her to partake of their repast. She refused, however, making the excuse that she had to go at all speed to the gods who were with the Ethiopians. After transmitting the wish of Achilles she left the home of these savage bachelors, which was no place for young, tender maidens. One of the old poets has described this meeting in a poem: 'The most powerful of the Gods is Eros, whom sandalled Iris bore to Zephyrus of the golden hair.' This is obviously a slander, for no girl would traffic with these wild creatures and we know that Eros was one of the primeval powers.

Boreas, too, once won a girl, but only by rape. When Orithyia, the daughter of the Attic king, was enjoying her dancing and games on the banks of the Ilissus with her handmaidens, she was seduced by Boreas, who carried her off to his savage abode in Thrace. Mares often had to serve as instruments of pleasure to the wind gods, who changed themselves into stallions, siring noble foals like the famous wild horses which grazed in the plains of Troy. Zephyrus, too, who had slaked his lust in a meadow on the shores of Oceanus with one of the harpies, Podarge, a sister of Iris, sired with her two horses—the noble horses of Achilles.

Aeolus, the lord of the winds, was a more graceful creature who lived with his six sons and daughters on a floating island. These offspring intermarried and lived in their father's palace, where there was always a fragrant smell of roast flesh. Odysseus, related to the Phaeacians his experiences on the island of Aeolia.

THE WORLD AND ITS PARTITION

AFTER the battles had been decided and the Titans had been overthrown on the advice of Ge, the gods chose Zeus to be their king and he rewarded them with honours and lands over which to rule. The universe was divided between the three Cronids—Poseidon, ruling over the sea, Hades the underworld which stretched between the earth and Tartarus, while Zeus himself ruled over the sky. The earth and Mount Olympus, the abode of the gods, were common property.

Tall, frowning Olympus which towered to the sky was from now on the seat of the gods. There was the palace of Zeus and the abodes of the other gods where they convened for discussion and for meals, enjoying nectar and ambrosia, the food which endowed them with immortality. Since they consumed neither bread nor wine they had no blood in their veins like humans but only a divine liquid called ichor. Olympus was entirely free from storms and rain and gleamed eternally in a bright cloudless sky.

Tartarus lay as far below the earth as the sky towered above it. An anvil falling from heaven to earth needed nine days and nine nights to fall, and it would have needed just as much time to reach Tartarus from the earth. Tartarus was surrounded by an iron stockade; outside lay the darkness of night and above grew the roots of the earth and the sea. In the deepest darkness, at the decree of Zeus, dwelt the Titans, and there was no escape for them, for now they were surrounded by the stockade and an iron gate built by Poseidon and guarded by the hundred-handed giants. Between Tartarus and the earth extended the kingdom of Hades, the murky underworld guarded by the hell-hound Cerberus. Earth, therefore, whose surface was divided into sea and land, was round and girt by the ocean and separated by a light space from the darkness below. The air spread out over the earth, and above this was the ether reaching to the vaults of the sky. Beyond the ocean was another base on which the half-sphere of the sky lay, and here were the entrances to the underworld, Hades. But even on the inhabited earth entrances to Hades could be found, as in the foothills of Taenarum through which Heracles descended to fetch Cerberus. In the dark underworld

also lay the Asphodel Meadow and four rivers flowed above it. We shall tell later of the culprits who were sent here for punishment. We shall mention here one group of men and women who, as their punishment, had to fetch water in cracked jars because they had defiled the sacred offerings of Eleusis. Later this was maintained to be the fate of the Danaids who had murdered their husbands on their wedding night and had thus not reached the goal of consecration of their lives.

On the banks of the stream an ancient ferryman, Charon, stood ready to receive the dead and for a fee rowed them over Oceanus. He was boorish, and did not like to be kept waiting. When Alcestis, who wanted to die for her husband, took her life she already saw him in her thoughts waiting for her:

'I see the boat with the oars twin-seeping,
And, his hand on the pole as in haste aye keeping,
Charon the Ferryman calleth, "What ho, wilt thou linger and
linger?
Hasten—'tis thou dost delay me!" he crieth with beckoning
finger.'

Euripides: *Alcestis*, 252f

At the end of the earth in the west, near the Garden of the Hesperides where Atlas bears the sky on his shoulders, was the dwelling of Hemera (the Day) and Nyx (the Night). They were never at home at the same time. When one returned to her house after giving light to men the other left it in order to bestow sleep on the dwellers of the earth. There, too, the children of Night, on whom the sun never shines, had their dwelling—Hypnos (Sleep), who was gentle and well disposed to man, and Thanatos (Death), who housed a ruthless iron heart in his breast: no one who fell into his clutches was ever released.

In the east, on the shores of Oceanus, lay the land of Aea with the city of Acêtes which later Jason would visit with his Argonauts. Here, too, was the palace of Helios, which he left each morning on his path across the sky, and the abode of the dark-skinned Ethiopians whose land extended far in the south to west and east and to whose sacrificial feasts the immortal gods always went. In the south of the earth by Oceanus lived the pygmies with whom the cranes always fought in the winter. In the north-

west, veiled in mist, was the land of the Cimmerians on which the sun never shone, and far to the north dwelt the Hyperboreans, a sacred race beloved by Apollo.

When the gods shared the world between them, the island of Rhodes still lay in the depths of the sea and Helios dwelt far from the other gods and had been given no portion. Zeus tried to find a solution but the sun god would not agree. On the great ocean he saw a land gradually rising out of the water and he made Zeus promise that he should be the owner of this island. When the island, Rhodes, finally rose from the waves Helios was its ruler and from a maiden named after the island he became the father of seven sons, the wisest men of primeval times, the forefathers of the later kings of the island. Later, when Athene sprang from the head of Zeus, Helios encouraged his sons to raise an altar to her as the foremost goddess. When they climbed the mountain to sacrifice to the goddess, none of them had remembered to bring fire for kindling wood. So they offered unburnt offerings to Athene and the goddess received them graciously.

Below in the depths of Tartarus, also lived Styx, the most powerful of the countless daughters of Oceanus and Tethys. When Zeus summoned all the gods to his aid at the outbreak of the Titan war, promising them great honours, Styx also rallied to him with her children. These were Zelos (Ambition), Nike (Victory), Cratos (Strength) and Bia (Force). Later these four offspring lived in the retinue of Zeus as his helpers and servants. Zeus made Styx, however, guardian of the most powerful oath of the gods. This terrifying creature, universally feared, lived far from the gods in the underworld. Every time some dispute or quarrel arose among them or one of the gods was accused of lying, Zeus sent his messenger, Iris, to fetch in a golden pitcher the icy water of the Styx which fell from a high cliff, a tributary of Oceanus furnishing a tenth of its water. The gods kept their vows by the waters of the Styx and whoever swore falsely was deprived for a whole year of his breath and his voice and lay asleep without nectar and ambrosia, the food of the immortals. After this there were further labours and he had to remain apart from the gods for nine years before he could rejoin their throng.

Later Zeus loosed the Titans from their bonds in Tartarus and in future Cronus ruled on the Island of the Blest in Oceanus. According to Orphic wisdom any man who, during the course of three births, led an upright life dwelt for ever in these islands.

'But they that through those three lives have endured, their
spirit refraining
From sin upon each side death
Those traverse the pathway to Zeus, to the Tower of Cronus
attaining
Where the breezes of Ocean breathe
Round the Isles of the Blest, where flowers all-golden like
flames are glowing,
Which are drooping from trees of splendour, or float on the
flood soft-flowing;
And their heads and their hands they enwreath
As it standeth by just Rhadamanthus decreed, the eternal
assessor
Of Cronus the husband of Rhea, of her who is throned
possessor
Of dominion the universe o'er.
And Peleus and Cadmus are numbered amidst the glorified
there;
And the heart of Zeus by Thetis' petition was swayed, that
she bare
Achilles to that blest shore.'

Pindar: *Olympian Odes*, II

In the starry sky gleamed constellations, originally men who had been translated into the sky by the gods, such as the Bear—formerly Callisto, who was turned into a star by Zeus; not far from Bootes was bright Arcturus, once Arcas, the son of Callisto; the Pleiades, the daughters of Atlas and the Hyades, once the nurses of Dionysus; Orion, Poseidon's son; and then bright Sirius, Orion's hound, who rises in the autumn and by his brilliance outshines many of the others in the night sky. Although he shines brightly he is a sign of ill omen, for he brings fever and suffering to humanity.

POSEIDON

POSEIDON, the son of Cronus, brother of Zeus, had received the sea as his domain at the distribution of the world. He was the shaker of the earth, the raiser of the sea waves, the tamer of horses, protector of ships and wielder of the trident. In Thessaly he cleft the mountains with his trident, joining the inland sea to the oceans through the Vale of Tempe.

His spouse was Amphitrite and their son Triton. A second son was the Cyclops, Polyphemus, whom Odysseus blinded, thereby rousing the anger of the god and causing himself great misfortune on his homeward journey. In the Trojan war Poseidon was on the side of the Greeks because he had once been offended by one of the Trojan kings, Laomedon.

When Demeter wandered through the land in search of her daughter, Poseidon pursued her in ardent courtship. The goddess changed herself into a mare and hid among the horses of Onus in Arcady. But the god found and mounted her and she gave birth to the horse, Arion. Hercules later came into possession of this wind-swift beast, which he used in his struggle against Cycnus. Adrastus, with his help, saved himself from the battle in the expedition of the Seven against Thebes.

In Argolis, Poseidon in his anger against Inachus had caused all the springs to dry up. Thereupon King Danaus sent his daughters to fetch water. One of them, Amymone, was molested by a satyr, but Poseidon, attracted by her cries, chased him away. The Danaid bestowed her love upon the sea god and became the mother of Nauplius and the source which sprang from the god's trident was named after her.

Machaon and Podalirius, sometimes called the sons of Asclepius, were also considered as sons of Poseidon, and the sea god bestowed upon them great fame as doctors; to the former he revealed the art of healing wounds and to the second the gift of diagnosis. Thus Podalirius was the first to recognize the madness of Ajax upon observing his glittering eyes and melancholy behaviour.

THE ALOIDS

AFTER the war with the Titans the gods fought many battles with giants and monsters. Iphimedia, the wife of Aloeus, had borne two sons to Poseidon—Otus and Ephialtes—who were called the Aloids after their foster father. Each year they grew an ell and a fathom in length so that after nine years they were nine fathoms high and nine ells broad. They were a threat to the gods, tried to turn the sky into a battlefield and pile Pelion upon Ossa to scale Olympus. They would have accomplished this had they been allowed to grow to manhood, but Apollo killed them beforehand. They had already captured Ares and bound him to an iron vessel for thirteen months and he would have succumbed had the stepmother of the giant children not betrayed the whereabouts of the war god. Hermes released him in secret from his imprisonment.

THE THREE DAUGHTERS OF CRONUS

OF the three daughters of Cronus and Thea, Hera became the wife of her brother, Zeus, and was universally honoured as queen of the gods. She bore Zeus Hebe, the Goddess of Youth, who poured out the divine nectar at the feasts in Olympus and later became the wife of Heracles on his apotheosis; in addition to Hebe she bore Eileithyia, the Goddess of Child Bearing, and Ares, the grim forbidding God of War.

The eldest daughter of Cronus was Hestia, who refused to entertain love and marriage and rejected the courtship of Poseidon and Apollo. Zeus allowed her to minister by the hearth in the centre of the house; in the abode of the gods on Olympus, in the temples of the gods, in the houses of men on earth and also in the Prytaneum, the town hall where the guests of state were entertained. In honour of a newly dedicated Prytaneum, built by Aristagoras of Tenedos, Pindar sings:

‘O Hestia, child of Rhea, who hast city-halls in ward,
Sister of Zeus most high and Hera throned beside her lord,
To thy bower welcome Aristagoras with gracious mien;



Zeus. Villa Albani, Rome.



Hera. Vatican Museum.

His feres to approach they gleaming sceptre welcome
graciously,
Who keep in safety Tenedos the while they honour thee.
Thee oft as chief of Goddesses with spilt wine reverence they,
And oft with reek of sacrifice, while peal out lyre and lay . . .

Pindar: *Nemean Odes*, XI

When Alcestis was about to commit suicide she approached the hearth in her house, prayed, took her leave of the goddess and begged for her children:

'Queen, for I pass beneath the earth, I fall
Before thee now, and never more, and pray:—
Be mother to my orphans: mate with him
a loving wife, with her a noble husband.
Nor as their mother dieth so may they
My children, die untimely, but with weal,
In the homeland fill up a life of bliss.'

Euripides: *Alcestis*, 163-9

The third daughter of Cronus was Demeter, who presented Zeus with a daughter, Persephone.

ZEUS AND HERA

DURING the war with the Titans, Rhea had entrusted her daughter, Hera, to Oceanus and Tethys by whom she was brought up. Unknown to his parents, Zeus married her. As the wife of the King of Heaven she pursued him with great jealousy and not without just cause. Legion were the children that mortals and immortals presented to him. Before his marriage to Hera, Metis (Reflection), the wise counsellor, had been his wife, then Themis, who bore him three daughters—the Horae (Seasons), Eunomia (Order), Dike (Law) and Irene (Peace), the firm pillars of the state who kept presumption in check, to whom the Gates of Heaven were entrusted and who had the power to open and close the thick clouds. The daughters of Themis were also the Three Moerae (Fates), Clotho, Lachesis

and Atropos, who endowed mortals with good and evil. But the Moerae were also called the daughters of Night, who punished the crimes of gods and men and whose rage did not abate until they had chastised the transgressors. A poet sings of them:

'Divine Themis, the Goddess of good counsel was led by the Moerae

in a chariot with golden horses from the depths of the ocean to the sacred steps of Olympus to be the first wife of Zeus the Saviour. Their children were the fruitful hours.'

Pindar: *Olympian Odes*, 13, 6ff

The daughter of Oceanus, Eurynome, bore Zeus the Three Graces—joy-spreading Aglaia, Euphrosyne and Thalia, from whose eyes streamed irresistible love. To quote Pindar once more:

'Tis with help that the Graces, the worshipful, render
That the Gods' own dancings and feastings be holden;
Yea, these be dispensers of all things in Heaven.
By the side of the Lord of the bow all-golden,
Pythian Apollo, be thrones to them given;
The Olympian Sire are they ever adoring,
And his majesty's fountain for aye outpouring.'

Pindar: *Olympian Odes*, 14

In addition to this his sister, Demeter, presented him with a daughter, Persephone; Mnemosyne bore him the Nine Muses, and Leto gave birth to Apollo and Artemis, until finally he married Hera. Later Maia bore him Hermes, Niobe Argos and Pelasgos, Dione Aphrodite, Semele Dionysus, Alcmena Heracles, Dia Pirithous, Danaë Perseus, Europa Minos and Rhadamanthus, Io Epaphus, Leda the Dioscuri, Antiope the twins Amphiion and Zethus, Laodamia Sarpedon, to mention only a few of the most important.

Another of Zeus' daughters was Ate, the delusion which brought men to ruin as she strode with rapid feet over their heads without touching the ground. Other daughters of Zeus, the Litae, the harrowing pleas, followed Ate slowly with limping feet and averted eyes. They helped the men who honoured them

and listened to their prayers, but they begged Zeus to punish anyone who insulted them in defiance. Thus even Agamemnon knew remorse: when he took the slave girl, Briseis, from Achilles he had acted in the blindness of passion. He himself was not actually guilty, but Zeus, the Moerae and the Furies lurking in the darkness. This blindness had fallen upon him through the power of Ate, who, on one occasion, had even bemused Zeus—the day that Hera outwitted him when Alcmene gave birth to Heracles. When Alcmene was about to be delivered of Heracles in Thebes Zeus addressed the gods: ‘Today a hero will be born who will one day rule over all the inhabitants of the earth.’ Hera outwitted her husband by making him swear on oath to this effect and hastened to Argos where she knew that the wife of Sthenelus was seven months pregnant. Hera hastened this birth, held back that of Alcmene and returned to Olympus to report to Zeus: ‘A hero has been born who one day is destined to rule—Eurystheus, the son of Sthenelus of the race of the Zeus-son, Perseus.’ As a result Heracles later had to serve Eurystheus. Then Zeus seized Ate, who had bemused his senses, scornfully by the hair and flung her out of Olympus with the oath: ‘Never more is she to set foot in Olympus.’

When Zeus bore Athena from his head, Hera was furious with him, for he spurned her and brought the magnificent goddess into the world without her aid while her own son, Hephaestus, was a sickly cripple. When she saw the misshapen child she had borne without the aid of Zeus, in her jealousy she flung him far out into the sea, where he was rescued by the daughters of Nereus, Thetis and her sisters—in particular Eurynome. At that time Hera addressed Zeus in the following words:

‘O knave of the wily plots, what new thing wilt thou devise?
How durst thou alone bring forth Athena of azure eyes?
And was I past bearing?—I, who was named mid the Death-
less thy bride,
Yea, Queen over all the Immortals in broad-arched Heaven
that abide?
Beware now lest I devise hereafter mischief for thee!
Ay, now will I so contrive that a son shall be born unto me
Who over the deathless Gods the pre-eminence shall win.

And yet will I shame not thine holy couch, nor mine own,
therein;
No, neither will I draw nigh to thy bed, but far away
From thy side will I be, yet still among Deathless Ones will
I stay.'

Turning on her heel she started to pray and to beat the earth
with the palms of her hands:

'Give ear to me now, thou Earth; hear, thou broad Heaven on
high;
Hear, O ye Titan Gods which dwell deep down under earth
Round vasty Tartarus, ye of whom Gods and men had birth.
All ye give ear to me now, and a son to my prayer give ye,
In whom Zeus hath no part, yet in might no lesser than he:
Ay, mighty as Thunderer Zeus is, mightier yet let him be!'

Iliad, XVIII, 394-405

Then she kept apart from Zeus and remained in her shrines
enjoying the offerings and when her time came she brought into
the world, Typhaon, who resembled neither god nor man, a
hideous monster, a bane to humanity. This creature she took to
the dragon at Delphi, evil to evil.

During the Trojan war Hera was on the side of the Greeks.
In their days of distress when the greatest Greek heroes were
wounded and the battle raged round the camp, Hera resorted
to a piece of cunning in order to outwit Zeus, who had con-
trived the discomfiture of the Greeks, and to help them. She
went into the apartments which Hephaestus had built for her,
adorned herself with great care and summoned Aphrodite to her
in flattering tones. She must lend her the means, she said, to
arouse love and longing in the hearts of gods and men, for she
was on her way to visit Oceanus and Tethys; they lived together
in strife and she would bring about a reconciliation. Aphrodite
loosened the silken girdle which contained her magic charms
and had the power to intoxicate even cool-headed men. Hera
hid the girdle in her bosom and strode from Olympus over
the snow-decked mountains of Thrace where she found Hypnos,
the brother of Thanatos. She invoked his aid and promised him

a chair and a saddle fashioned by Hephaestus. Hypnos was to put Zeus to sleep as soon as she had made love with him. But Hypnos remembered how once before he had put Zeus to sleep at the wish of Hera and how badly things had turned out for him and not until Hera promised him one of the Graces, Pasithea, for a bride did he agree and leave with her. So Hera came to Mount Ida on the highest peak of which sat Zeus, and while Hypnos perched on a nearby tree in the shape of a bird Hera approached her husband with all her charms. She desired, she said, to visit Oceanus and Tethys to bring about a reconciliation, and she had come here to inform him of this. Now Aphrodite's magic girdle began to have its effect. Never, said Zeus, had a woman filled him with so much love as Hera did now. Neither Ixion's wife, nor Danaë, nor Europa the daughter of the Phoenix, nor Semele, Alcmena, Demeter, nor Leto. He ordered Hera to lie with him, but she held back bashfully. How disagreeable it would be if one of the gods came and discovered them making love. But Zeus pacified her. Clouds through which not even Helios could penetrate enveloped the loving couple, and flowers blossomed round the bed of the divine pair. Zeus fell asleep, and in the meantime, at the behest of Hera and against the wishes of her lord and master, the Trojans with the aid of Poseidon were repulsed on the battlefield. When Zeus woke a little later and saw the Trojans fleeing in panic he turned angrily to Hera and ordered her to send immediately for Iris and Apollo. Hera went to Olympus with his order and Iris and Apollo immediately flew to Ida to see Zeus. Iris was sent to Poseidon on the battlefield to make him withdraw from the battle. The sea god obeyed the order with bad grace. Apollo was ordered to give Hector strength for a new contest.

Once before, Hera, with the help of Hypnos, had put her husband to sleep to save Heracles from a storm at sea. On that occasion her infuriated husband had hung the cunning goddess by chains between heaven and earth and bound two anvils to her feet. When he could catch one of the other gods he flung him down from Olympus. When he forbade them for the second time to intervene in the battle for Troy, he threatened to fling them into Tartarus if they disobeyed him. Let them try to oppose me, he cried. They all tugged together at a golden chain which

he held by the other end; they could not drag him down from heaven. If it pleased him, he said, he could haul up the earth and the sea and secure them to Olympus by a chain so that everything swayed in the air. On another occasion Hera, Poseidon and Athene were angry with Zeus and bound him in chains. Thetis alone came to his aid, freed him from his bonds calling upon the hundred-handed giant, whom the gods called Briareus and men called Aegaeon, who exceeded his own father in strength. He sat down beside Zeus so that the gods became terrified and made no further attempts against their lord and master.

LAMIA, ANGELUS AND ECHETUS

IN Libya once lived a very beautiful woman called Lamia, who was reputed to be the daughter of Belus and Lybia. Zeus united with her in love and Hera killed all the children of this union from jealousy. In her grief Lamia lost her beauty and became a hideous old woman. After her death she wandered around as a ghost terrifying everyone, changing into every possible shape and robbing and killing other women's children. The Greeks believed that there were many Lamiae and they were much feared as vampires and bogies. Empusa, Mormo and Gello were such creatures. They belonged to the ghostly troop of Hecate. A similar fate was suffered by a daughter of Zeus and Hera, called Angelus. She had been brought up by the nymphs but then purloined one of her mother's ointments and gave it to her father's mistress, Europa. Pursued by Hera she fled into the house of a midwife where she came in contact with a corpse, as a result of which both women became unclean. She was purified by the Cabiri in the Acherusian Lake and subsequently became the Goddess of the Dead and of the underworld.

At this juncture we must mention a male figure of terror: Echetus. When Odysseus, unrecognized in the guise of a beggar, came to his palace on his return home he quarrelled with Irus and was about to come to blows with the suitor. Another, however, Antinous, spoke to Irus, who had already begun to recoil in terror: 'If the stranger here defeats you I will have you shipped over to the mainland to King Echetus, the destroyer of men. He

will cut off your ears and nose with his hideous knife, tear out your genitals and throw them to the dogs to eat.' Antinous later threatened Odysseus, the beggar, with the same words when he asked to be allowed to draw the bow. It is rumoured that Echetus subsequently became a tyrant in Sicily, who oppressed his underlings and put all strangers to a shameful death. He had thought out the most gruesome punishments and the reputation of his collection of torture instruments was so widespread that people were even sent to him from abroad when it was wished to inflict upon them a terrible form of death. Eventually, however, he himself was stoned to death by his own people.

THE MUSES

By the Titaness, Mnemosyne, Zeus had nine daughters, the Muses. They entertained the god in Olympus by their singing, graced the marriages of Thetis and Peleus, of Harmonia and Cadmus. They sang the dirge at the funeral of Achilles. Apollo was their inspirer and companion, and poets invoked their aid in their work. The songs of the Muses told of what is, what will be and what had once been. As a prelude they sang of the race of the gods which in the beginning the broad sky conceived with the earth, and then of the gods, their offspring, the distributors of good, and finally of Zeus, the father of gods and men. They praised Zeus at the commencement and the end of their songs as the highest of the immortals and the strongest of the strong. Then they sang of the human race and of the savage giants. In this way they joyed their father's heart. Mnemosyne had given birth to them in Pieria not far from Olympus, so that men should forget their cares and sorrows. Zeus spent nine nights with Mnemosyne far from the immortal gods, and in the course of time nine daughters were born, each ready to sing in harmony and always serene in heart. Clio was the firstborn, the muse of history; Euterpe, the second, the flute player; Melpomene, the tragic muse; Thalia, the muse of comedy; Erato, the lyre player; Terpsichore, the spirit of the dance; Polyhymnia, the singer of sacred songs; Urania, the muse of astronomy, and Calliope, the epic muse with the beautiful voice.

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All singers stemmed from the Muses and Apollo, all kings from Zeus. Happy the man blest by the Muses. Honey-sweet flowed the words from his mouth. When a poet, struck by some new sorrow and sad at heart, became a servant of the Muses—singing the praise of the early heroes and the immortal gods—he forgot his grief and sorrow and the goddesses showered gifts upon him.

On one occasion the singer, *Thamyris*, maintained that no one could sing so beautifully as he and that he would defeat the Muses if it came to a contest. As a punishment he was blinded and his gift of song was taken from him.

Much, too, has been told of the sons of the Muses, and particularly of the two famous Thracians, *Orpheus* and *Rhesus*.

Orpheus was the son of *Calliope* and the Thracian, *Oeagrus*, while, according to other versions, *Apollo* was his father. *Orpheus* was a great singer and musician who, by his art and the strains of his lyre, could enchant beasts, plants and stones so that they gathered round and followed him. He was the founder of the secret cult of the *Orphic* mysteries, and was famous as the discoverer of healing herbs and effective spells. Many were the books that he wrote giving his views on the creation of the world and the gods. As a singer he also took part in the voyage of the *Argonauts*. When his wife, *Eurydice*, died, he went down into the underworld to bring her back into the light of day. By his sweet song he managed to soften the hearts of the rulers in *Hades* so that they were prepared to grant his wish. But they added the stipulation that he must not look round on the way back. Overcome with longing, however, he turned round and saw *Eurydice* slipping back into the mists of the underworld. *Orpheus* found his death in his homeland where he was torn to pieces by the Thracian women—perhaps because he had sinned against *Dionysus* or because he was considered to be a woman-hater. The Muses hastened to the spot, collected his limbs and buried them. His head and his lyre, however, had fallen into the sea and were cast up by the waves on the island of *Lesbos*, where they were buried by the inhabitants.

The second son of the Muses, a man of no artistic pretensions, was *Rhesus*. His father was either the Thracian, *Eioneus*, or the Thracian river god, *Strumon*, and his mother was one of the

Muses. Ashamed to face her sisters after giving birth to the boy she placed him on the River Strumon and the river god gave him to the nymphs to educate. He became King of the Thracians and in the tenth year of the Trojan war came to the aid of the Trojans with his men and his speedy horses. At this time the Greeks were in a parlous state and the Trojans were encamped on the field outside the city by the tomb of Ilus. Odysseus and Diomedes went on a reconnaissance at night to discover the Trojans' plan. But Hector had also sent a man, Dolon, the son of the herald, Eumedes, to spy out the Grecian camp. Odysseus and Diomedes took him prisoner. He informed them of the newly arrived Thracian prince, Rhesus, with his white horses and golden weapons, and also revealed the place where he was encamped. Diomedes slew him and the two Greeks crawled on farther to the Trojan camp. There they killed twelve of the Thracians, including Rhesus, quietly led away his horses, swung themselves up on their backs and rode back to the Greek camp. Hector wanted to raise a tomb to Rhesus before Troy but his mother, the Muse, hastened to the spot and carried the corpse back to his homeland in the Pangaeon Mountains where in future he was worshipped in a cave as a deity.

THE SONS OF IAPETUS

IAPETUS was a brother of Cronus, son of Uranus and Ge. He married Clymene, the daughter of Oceanus, who bore him four sons: Atlas, Menetius, the subtle Prometheus and the crazy Epimetheus who was a bane to humans.

Atlas was the father of the seven Pleiades, through whom he became the ancestor of famous hero races. The names of the Pleiades were Taygete, Electra, Alcyone, Asterope, Celaeno, Maia and Merope. Later they were raised to the sky and became a constellation. Atlas himself was forced to bear the sky on his shoulders at the spot where the Garden of the Hesperides lay and the bronze threshold where Nyx and Hemera (Day and Night) met.

Zeus dispatched the transgressor, Menetius, to Erebus, hurling a thunderbolt at him as a punishment for his impious behaviour.

In the meantime the earth had become populated with humans and the gods trafficked with them. Originally Prometheus acted as a judge in Mecone between gods and men, distributing among them the slaughtered oxen and at the same time deliberately deceiving Zeus. On one side he laid the meat and the entrails with much fat, wrapped in the skin, the lights on top of it, and on the other side bones which he hid completely under white fat. Zeus then had to choose. But the god saw through the deception and determining to encompass the destruction of man lifted the fat with both hands and in his rage saw the bones beneath it. Subsequently at their sacrifices to the gods men burned the bones of animals wrapped in fat, preserving the good meat for themselves. In view of this deception Zeus decided to deprive men of fire. Here, too, however, Prometheus deceived him. He stole the fire in a hollow reed and presented it to the dwellers on earth. When Zeus perceived that man was now in possession of fire he devised an evil gift which would delight them and make them smile. He caused Hephaestus to mould a beautiful virgin of clay who was then to be arrayed with costly jewels and garments by Athena. Both gods and men were astonished when they saw Hephaestus' handiwork. Athena taught her domestic work, Aphrodite endowed her with grace and the power to charm the senses, Hermes bestowed upon her a sense of cunning and the power of rhetoric and the Graces and Seasons enhanced her beauty. She was christened Pandora because all the gods had brought her gifts. Hermes led the girl down to men and mad Epimetheus received her, ignoring his brother's warning that no one should accept any gifts from Zeus. From Pandora stemmed all those human women who live on earth to the misfortune of men, participating not in their distress but in their times of plenty. As the bees in their hives raise drones which fill their bellies from the work of others while they themselves spend the whole day until sundown industriously building white honeycombs, so Zeus gave mortal man women to be his bane, since like the drones they were his companions in mischief. Previously men had lived without suffering, sorrow or disease, but Pandora lifted the lid of the casket in which all the sufferings were imprisoned and they flew out and from now on began to torture mankind. Then in her terror she closed the lid

and hope alone remained inside. In this way untold misery descended upon humans, and the earth and the sea were full of them. Diseases were born by day and night in silence, Zeus having robbed them of their voices. Thus no one could escape the will of Zeus. As a punishment, moreover, Prometheus was bound by Zeus to a rock and each day an eagle flew over and ate his liver which grew again during the night until later Heracles unloosed his bonds. Zeus, who wanted his son to win great renown, consented to this.

Aeschylus tells this story differently. When the conflict for supremacy broke out between the Titans and the younger gods, Prometheus had intended to advise the Titans, for he knew that in this conflict cunning, as opposed to brute force, would prove decisive. But the Titans would not listen to him and so Prometheus turned away from them and placed himself on the side of the younger gods. As a result Cronus and his adherents were conquered and banished to Tartarus, with the exception of the venerable Oceanus, who had not taken part in the rebellion against Zeus. Then Zeus distributed the offices and realms among the gods, but he paid no heed to men, for in fact he wanted to eradicate them and create a new race. Prometheus in his compassion was the only one to take their part. He cared for them and planted hope in their hearts, brought them fire and taught them a variety of arts.

As a punishment for helping men, Zeus had him bound by Hephaestus and his servants, Cratus and Bia, in the Scythian desert near the Caucasus far away from all men. Here the Titan nursed in his breast the secret which Themis had once told him: the rule of Zeus is not eternal; from his marriage a son will be born who will become mightier than his father. Only Prometheus could show how this fate could be averted. He also knew that in the far distant future he would be freed of his bonds by a hero from the family of Io. Nevertheless Prometheus defiantly refused to reveal his secret, even though he was threatened by even direr punishment. He was to be hurled into Tartarus and then brought into the light of day once more for chastisement. He had to wait patiently, chained to his rock, until Zeus' eagle appeared and tore out his liver, and this punishment would last until one of the gods volunteered to go down on his behalf

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into the dark depths of Hades. Prometheus still refused to reveal his secret to much-hated Zeus and a thunderbolt hurled him down to Tartarus.

Aeons later, when the Titans were released from their prison by Zeus, Prometheus once more came out into the daylight, was chained in the Caucasus and tortured by Zeus' eagle. He longed for death, although he knew that he was immortal. He was finally freed by Heracles, a descendant of the thirteenth generation from Io, who shot the eagle and at the same time begged the centaur, Chiron, to go down into the underworld for him. At last Prometheus revealed his secret. It was Thetis, the daughter of Nereus, who was destined to bear a son who would be stronger than his father if Zeus or Poseidon were to be her husband. Upon this Zeus, who was filled with love for the Nereid, refrained from having intercourse with her, gave her to Peleus as a wife and she became the mother of Achilles.

ATHENE, HEPHAESTUS

ZEUS' favourite daughter was Pallas Athene, the wise grey-eyed goddess, the aggressive protector of cities, the immaculate virgin born from her father alone. To the amazement of the gods she sprang, complete in gleaming gold armour brandishing a lance, from his head. Olympus rocked and the earth growled ominously, the sea rose in its anger and the sun god held his speedy horses in check. The following story is also told: Zeus had taken Metis, the giver of good advice, a daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, to be his first wife. But when she was about to give birth to a child he devoured her, putting her to sleep with flattering words, for he had learned from Uranus and Ge that Metis would give birth to a daughter, her father's peer in strength and wise counsel, and later to a strong son, the future King of Gods and Men. Thus Zeus preserved Metis in his own belly so that she could show him what was good and what was evil. This is why he gave birth to a daughter out of his own head. It was also related that Hephaestus or Prometheus cleft open the head of Zeus so that Athene could see the light of day.

Aphrodite had no power over Athene. She preferred war

and battle and taught mankind many arts; she taught men to build carts and the girls to spin and weave. She was allied to Hephaestus, who was also a teacher of men, since at that time they were still living in caves like animals. He was the artisan and artistic smith of the gods. After his banishment, during his nine-year stay with Thetis and the Nereids, he forged many works of art, including a throne which had miraculous powers. To take his revenge he sent this gift to his mother. When Hera sat down on this throne she was rooted to it and could not rise to her feet. Her son, Ares, tried to fetch Hephaestus to free his mother, but the smith chased him with firebrands from his workshop. Dionysus was more successful. He made the smith drunk, placed him on the back of a mule and led him back to Olympus. Hephaestus then loosed the spell and freed his mother. As a reward and by way of reconciliation he received Aphrodite as his wife. A most incongruous pair. Their marriage did not last very long.

HEPHAESTUS AND APHRODITE

IN the home of the limping smith, Aphrodite, in the absence of her husband, enjoyed the visits of Ares, enamoured of his fine frame and the presents he brought her. Helios, the sun god, who saw everything, observed the couple making love and reported the deceit to the cuckold husband. Hephaestus with great cunning proceeded to forge a net with strong, unbreakable links and secreted it in the room where the marriage couch stood. Then he went off on a trip to the island of Lemnos. Ares, who had been on the alert watching for his departure, crept into the house to visit his pretty mistress. In joyous anticipation they climbed on to the couch and at this moment the cunningly contrived bonds fell down, the net held them fast and they realized that they had been caught in a trap. Hephaestus broke off his journey, for Helios had once more told him everything. He stood at the door of his house and in a loud voice called to the gods to come and see the fun. Aphrodite had brought shame on his house and had played the wanton with Ares. Of course he was handsome and had two straight legs while he himself was lame

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and weakly. Now the two were enchained and he would not release their bonds before her father repaid the dowry he had provided for Aphrodite. The gods hurried up, but the goddesses remained away from embarrassment. The laughter was loud and long. The Olympians gossiped and chattered and a host of proverbs were born. 'Evil doers do not prosper.' 'The race is not always to the swift.' Hephaestus, the cripple, had outwitted Ares, the swiftest of the gods, who would now have to pay a forfeit to him. Apollo said to Hermes: 'You would be delighted to lie beside Aphrodite, bound to her with iron chains.' 'I would not say no, even if triple hands held me and the gods and goddesses all looked on,' replied the son of Maia. Poseidon alone did not laugh. He ordered Hephaestus to unloose the couple and agreed to be responsible for the forfeit. The smith freed the pair from their bonds. Ares hurried to Thrace and sweet-smiling Aphrodite retired to her shrine in Cyprus. Of this Cyprian shrine, Sappho, the poet, sang:

'Come Queen of Cyprus, come to me!
 Float hither from thy Paphian home;
 From all-welcoming haven come
 To me, to my maid-friends and thine!
 Be golden chalices by thee
 Brimmed up with heaven's nectar wine
 With banquet joys blent daintily.
 So for thank-offering shall be led
 A white kid to thy fane, to stand
 Before thine altar, and mine hand
 Libation drops thereon shall shed.'

Sappho: Fragment 5

ARES

AFTER his adventure with Aphrodite the god retired to his own country, wild, forbidding Thrace. This son of Zeus and Hera had been born there. Aphrodite bore him two fearsome sons: Phobus (Fear) and Deimos (Terror), who with their destructive father encouraged hosts of men to wage bloody wars and to harness the horses of war in battle. Later she bore him a daughter,

Harmonia, who married Cadmus, the ruler of Thebes. Ares also bore the name Enyalios and in the savage battle he was accompanied by the city-destroying goddess of war, Enyo.

The seven heroes who marched against Thebes swore by Ares, Enyo and Phobus to destroy the city or to die in the attempt.

In their hymns the warriors invoked him as the powerful charioteer with the golden helmet, the protector of cities and of Olympus, the father of the Goddess of Victory, Nike, and the colleague of Themis. But his own mother reproached unjustified acts of violence, and Athene, herself a Goddess of Battle, who hurried with the Aegis through the ranks of the warriors encouraging them to battle and giving them strength, called her brother a maniac, a bane to mankind who constantly changed sides. When, with Athene's help, Ares was wounded by Diomedes and went to Olympus to complain to Zeus, his father replied in the following strong words:

'Nay, thou renegade, sit not beside me to whine.
Most hateful art thou of the Gods in Olympus that dwell
Since ever thou lovest contention and battle and strife;
Thy mother is stubborn in temper, ungovernable.
E'en Hera my wife, and 'tis hard to rule her with words,
And methinks it was Hera's prompting that brought thee to
this.'

Iliad, V, 889-894

Heracles, too, wounded the grim God of War in battle after he had defeated his son, Cycnus. Once again Athene supported the hero against the gods, averted the spear which Ares had flung at his enemy and the god was wounded in the thigh by the lance of Heracles. Deimus and Phobus drove his chariot in battle.

The Amazons, too, ranked as the issue of Ares. They dwelt in Thrace or in Asia Minor at Themiscyra on the River Thermodon which flows into the Black Sea. A warlike race of women, man-haters and masculine, experienced in the use of weapons and in horsemanship. Priam in his youth allied himself with the Phrygians and attacked them. Bellerophon, Heracles and Theseus all waged war against them, and after the death of Hector their queen, Penthesilea, came to the aid of the Trojans.

THE WORKS OF HEPHAESTUS

LONG after Thetis had given Hephaestus asylum after his fall from Olympus he was able to show his gratitude to the goddess. When the Nereid's son, Achilles, in the Trojan war had lost the magnificent weapons he had lent to his friend, Patroclus, Thetis approached the heavenly smith to forge new weapons for her son. She found the lame god, who in the meantime had wedded the enchanting Charis, engaged on a remarkable piece of work: he was forging for the use of the gods twenty tripods which ran automatically on golden wheels. He broke off his work and immediately complied with Thetis' request that he should forge new weapons for Achilles—a curiously shaped shield adorned with countless figures, breastplate, helmet and greaves. All these he gave to the goddess. Other famous works left this smithy. Thetis on her visit, for example, saw gold statues of girls endowed with intelligence, voices and movement; they served as maids to their creator. In the palace of the Phaeacians, Odysseus found gold and silver dogs guarding the entrance, immortal, never-ageing, a masterpiece created by Hephaestus. He also made the sceptre carried by Agamemnon which was handed down from father to son after Zeus had presented it to Pelops. The terrifying aegis of Zeus, which Athene wore on her shoulder in battle, inspiring awe and terror, was also one of the immortal smith's works. A hundred gold tassels hung from it and the head of the Gorgon, Medusa, was attached to it. Hephaestus also built the dwellings of the gods on Olympus.

APHRODITE AND ANCHISES

OF Aphrodite it is not only told that she was born from the sea; she ranked as the daughter of Zeus and the beautiful Dione, a daughter of Oceanus and Thetis. Thus Aphrodite was half-sister to Arcs. When Aphrodite, adorned by the Seasons, entered the circle of the gods they were all well disposed to her and each god wished to possess her as his wife. She filled gods and men, as well as the beasts of the air, earth and sea, with love.

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Heracles. National Museum, Naples.



Pan and Daphnis. Naples.

She had no power, however, over Athene, Artemis and Hestia. Even Zeus fell under her sway, so that, forgetting Hera, he turned his attention to mortal women. In revenge Zeus inspired the Goddess of Love with longing for a mortal so that she could not flaunt her power of having united gods in love with mortals. She fell in love with Anchises, who tended the herds at the foot of Mount Ida near Troy. The goddess arrayed herself in all her finery in her temple at Paphos, on the island of Cyprus, and followed by an escort of wolves, lions, bears and panthers, made her way to Ida to see her lover. In anticipation of her meeting she instilled in her animal escort sweet desire so that they went to their lairs in the forest to mate. She found Anchises alone in his stalls, playing the lute. The other herdsmen had taken their flocks to graze in the meadows. As soon as he saw her—although she was in the guise and attire of a mortal maiden—he took her for a goddess, promised her offerings and begged her for love of the Trojans to give him many offspring and a long and happy life. Aphrodite insisted that she was no goddess but a mortal, the daughter of Otrus, the king of neighbouring Phrygia. She knew the Trojan language because she had been brought up by a Trojan nurse. Hermes had carried her off and brought her here so that she should become the wife of Anchises and present him with beautiful children. Hermes had announced this to her and immediately disappeared. Anchises, therefore, heeding this oracle, was to take her—the inexperienced virgin—to his parents and introduce her to his family as his future wife. He was also to send news to her own parents and then they would consummate their marriage. At the same time she filled him with love and the handsome herdsman, disdaining the conventional approach through the parents, suggested by the modest yet serious Aphrodite, invited the respectable but very willing girl to enjoy on the spot the sweets of love.

“Yet were I fain, O maid as a Goddess lovely and tall,
When once I had couched at thy side, to descend into Hades’
hall.”

He clasped her hand as he spake; and she turned her and
slowly she passed,

Aphrodite the laughter-winsome, with lovely eyes downcast,

Unto the fair-strewn couch that was heaped like a prince's bed
With mantles soft, and thereover the skins of bears were
spread,
And the fells of thunder-throated lions, the which by the
might
Of his own right hand had he slain on many a mountain-
height.
And so when the Goddess and man on the couch fair-
fashioned were laid,
Of her glittering jewels first her body he disarrayed,
Of the pins and the bended brooches, of earring and car-
canet-chain:
Then loosed he her girdle, her shimmering vesture from her
hath he ta'en:
On a high-seat silver-studded meetly he laid it by.
And Anchises then by the will of the Gods and by destiny
Lay with her—a man with a deathless Goddess, unknow-
ingly.'

Hesiod: *Theogony*, 965-1018

When the other herdsmen returned with their flocks and the couple had enjoyed their lovemaking, the goddess gently put her lover to sleep. Then she resumed her divine shape, attired herself in her finest robes and woke him. He recognized her divinity and in his terror begged for mercy, for no mortal survived after making love to a goddess. But Aphrodite pacified him. She would present him with a son, Aeneas, who in good time would rule over the Trojans. Since Anchises, however, was not immortal and did not possess eternal life, he could not be her husband. As soon as the child was born she would give it to the nymphs to rear and then in the fifteenth year bring his son to him in person when he was to take him to Troy. If anyone should ask him, however, who was the mother of his child he was to say that he was the son of one of the woodland nymphs. 'But if you gossip and boast in your madness that you lay in the arms of Aphrodite, Zeus will kill you with a thunderbolt. Now I have told you all. Mark my words, be careful to mention no names and think upon the anger of the gods.' In this wise spoke Aphrodite and returned to Olympus.

GODDESSES AND MORTAL MEN

APHRODITE was the only one of the great goddesses who gave herself to a mortal, for in Olympian circles great stress was laid on chastity and equality of birth. Very little is known of the lapses of the goddesses with the exception of Aphrodite. When Hermes visited the nymph, Calypso, one day with orders from Zeus, to release her friend, Odysseus, she replied scornfully:

‘... Jealous you are, O Gods, to envy stirred

Beyond all others, and can never brook
On loves of Goddesses and men to look,
Whoso of us takes one to share her bed
Openly: thus when Dawn rose-fingered took

Orion, then you Gods who live in bliss
Ceased not to grudge, till holy Artemis,
Gold-throned, her lover in Ortygia
With slumbrous arrows pierced and slew for this.

And with fair-tressed Demeter was it thus,
When she upon the son of Iasus
Let loose her heart, and on the furrowed tilth
Mixed with him in embraces amorous.

For Zeus thereof not long being unaware
Smote with his fiery bolt and slew him there.
And likewise now again you grudge it me,
O Gods, that mortal man my bed should share. ...’

Odyssey, V, 118-132

In actual fact lesser goddesses were allowed to give themselves to a mortal unpunished, as Circe and Calypso gave themselves to Odysseus. Such unions were occasionally afforded by Zeus and the other gods attended the marriage ceremony. Naturally they often proved disastrous to the issue. Apparently the greatest good fortune enjoyed by mortals was bestowed upon Cadmus and Peleus, whose marriages with an immortal the gods attend-

ed bringing gifts, and the choir of the Muses sang. Cadmus, the ruler of Thebes, wedded Harmonia, the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, and bore him five children: Ino, Semele, Agave, Autonoe and Polydorus. At the marriage in Thebes the Graces sang in addition to the Muses: 'What is beautiful is worthy of love and what is ugly is unworthy.' Apollo himself played his lyre. As a gift from the gods Harmonia received a necklace and a robe. And yet a curse lay on these gifts which was later fulfilled in the most gruesome manner in the Theban royal house, extending down to the sons of Oedipus.

DEMETER

THE Goddess of the Earth and the lower regions, Demeter, once deigned to give her love to a mortal, Iasion of Crete, and the child of this union was Plutus. This son travelled over land and sea bestowing wealth on anyone whom he met. Whenever someone found favour with Demeter and her daughter, Persephone, Plutus (Wealth) was sent into his house as a companion to bring him luck. But Iasion was destroyed by one of Zeus' thunderbolts.

Demeter, daughter of Cronus and Rhea, a sister of Zeus, had borne him a child, Persephone. When Core, as the girl was called, was playing and gathering flowers in a meadow with the daughters of Oceanus, the earth suddenly opened and Hades, the Prince of the Underworld, appeared in a golden chariot. He carried off and seduced the young girl. No one heard her cries except Hecate, the goddess who lived in a cave, and Helios. The god had abducted the struggling girl with the consent of his brother, Zeus. But while she could still see heaven, earth, the sea and the sun's beams she still hoped to draw her mother's attention and the mountain echoed with her loud cries. Demeter heard them from a distance and realized that an act of violence had been committed. For nine days she wandered over the earth in her weeds, but no one could give her any information. On the tenth day she met Hecate, who had only heard the girl's screams for help and did not know who her seducer was. The mother continued on her journey and visited Helios to

question him. He told her what she wanted to know. Hades had carried off the girl with the consent of Zeus, who wanted to give her to his brother as a wife. Certainly no unworthy husband, since at the partitioning of the world he had been given the domain of the underworld. Demeter's heart filled with hatred against Zeus and she kept away from the assemblies of the gods, wandering about among men in disguise so that no one should recognize her. At last she came to Eleusis where King Celeus reigned, and in the guise of an old woman she sat down by the virgin spring. There she found the king's daughters fetching water. They asked her amiably where she came from and what were her intentions. 'My name is Dos,' she replied, 'and I have come from Crete. I was carried off by robbers, but at Thoricus on the coast of Attica where they landed I escaped from them.' She begged them to give her hospitality in this strange land and she was prepared to be of service to them as befitted her age. In this way Demeter was taken into the house of Celeus, the King of Eleusis, and his wife, Metaneira. She sat on a pelt-covered stool with her head shrouded, in deep silence, never laughing, eating or drinking. She would accept only a concoction prepared from barley grains, water and the weed poly, and was entertained only by the jests of the servant maid, Iambe. She was finally taken in as nurse to the little prince, Demophon. The boy grew rapidly, to the surprise of his parents, for Demeter anointed him each day with ambrosia, holding him on her lap and breathing softly into him. At night she held him in the fire and in this way would have bestowed upon him eternal youth and immortality had Metaneira not listened one night and caught sight of the child lying in the flames. She screamed loudly in fear for her child, disturbing the goddess at her work. Demeter revealed herself. 'I can no longer bestow eternal life on your son, but honours will be showered upon him for he has rested on the lap of a goddess, and in future the youths of Eleusis will stage games and contests in his honour. I am Demeter, who was created for the healing and joy of gods and men. So build me a temple and an altar on the towering hill above the well Callichorus, and I myself will ordain the rites you are to practise to my conciliation.' She changed her disguise and stood there in her divine beauty surrounded by radiant

gleams. Then she disappeared from the palace. A temple and altar were built as she had ordered, and when the work was completed the goddess made it her home far from the serene gods, grieving bitterly for her daughter. It was a dreadful time for the human race. The earth bore no fruit, for the goddess was in retirement. In vain the steers ploughed the field, and the seed fell upon the earth without ripening. Men would have starved to death and the gods would have been deprived of sacrifice had not Zeus, observing this disaster, taken a hand. He sent Iris to summon Demeter to Olympus. When the sorrowing mother refused, all the gods came to her one by one with gifts to make her change her mind. But Demeter rejected them. She would not return to Olympus until she had seen her daughter. Then Zeus sent Hermes to Hades to bring Persephone back to the light and to return her to her mother. Hades released her but gave her the seeds of a pomegranate to eat so that she should not remain for ever with her mother in the outside world but would have to return to him, for the pomegranate was sacred to the underworld. Hermes brought the daughter to her mother in Eleusis. Demeter learned everything that had happened and also discovered that her daughter had eaten of the underworld fruit and was, therefore, bound to it. Only at the season when the earth was covered with blossom in the spring could she leave the underworld. Hecate appeared, embraced the future mistress of the nether regions, and in future lived at her court. Zeus then sent Rhea to Demeter to bring her back into the circle of the gods. For two-thirds of the year the daughter could remain with her mother but a third of the year, in winter, she had to dwell in the underworld. Demeter agreed, allowed the crops to ripen once more and taught the princes of Eleusis the sacrifice and the sacred ritual.

'O fortunate the man! O bless'd is he,
Who, skill'd in these, fulfils his ministry:
He, to whose note the auguries are given,
No rite transgress'd, and void of blame to Heaven!'

Heriod: Theogony 409-411

After this she returned to the gods on Olympus.

In the fruitful plain of Dotion, in Thessaly, a beautiful grove was dedicated to Demeter. She was deeply attached to it. One day a king's son, Erysichthon, felled one of the trees, and when the goddess, in the guise of a priestess, appeared to him and warned him of the divine wrath he answered rudely that he would build a house from the wood of the tree in which to carouse with his friends. Then the goddess cursed him with a burning, insatiable desire which could never be appeased, and he became known as Aethon (the Burning One). He consumed his entire wealth and property and finally had to beg for crumbs. It was also related that Erysichthon had a daughter, a sorceress, who could change herself into all manner of beasts. He sold her in some new shape each day, living from the proceeds, and the daughter changed herself back into human form and returned to him.

HECATE, LETO, APOLLO, ARTEMIS

THE Titan couple, Coeus and Phoebe, had two daughters—Leto and Asteria. The latter married the Titan son, Perses, who exceeded all others in cunning; their offspring was Hecate, the future Queen of Spirits and Ghosts. She lived at homely cross-roads—goddess of the peasants and small folk. The peasant poet extolled her powers. She was also honoured above all others by Zeus because she had a share of the earth, the raging sea and the starry sky.

Asteria's sister was Leto, a mild, friendly creature well disposed to men and gods. She presented Zeus with two children, the twins Apollo and Artemis. Pursued by the jealousy of Hera Leto wandered through the land trying to find some place for her delivery, but no land or island would accept her for fear of offending the wife of Zeus. After long wanderings she gave birth to Artemis on the Island of Quails, Ortygia, and to Apollo on Delos. At first Delos, the lonely rocky island, rejected the harassed goddess and refused her asylum. But when Leto swore that a great temple would be built for the god in her womb, and all men would attend the sacrificial feasts, the island rejoiced and allowed her to land. Many goddesses were present at the birth

but naturally Hera was absent, as was Eileithyia the goddess of childbirth. Not until the latter had been summoned in secret could Leto give birth. Apollo was born, the earth rejoiced and the goddesses were filled with jubilation. Fed on nectar and ambrosia the young god spoke of his future works: the cithara was to be his favourite and sacred to him, as well as the inflexible bow, and he would in prophecy inform men of the will of Zeus. From now on the island of Delos was sacred to Phoebus Apollo.

It is also related that Delos originally floated on the waves driven by the wind, but when Leto visited the island in her travail four pillars grew from the ocean bed and the island stood firm, so that the goddess could bring her two children into the world. Later when Apollo descended from Olympus in search of an oracle sanctuary he visited many regions before finding a suitable place for his shrine. On this travels he also visited the source, Telphusa, near Haliartus on Lake Copae in Bocotia. The place found favour in his eyes. He made known his wishes to the nymphs of the source and began his building. But Telphusa rejected him in scorn. This site with its busy traffic was not suitable for a temple. He would do better to found his shrine in Crisa at the foot of Parnassus where the sound of hoof-beats and chariots would not disturb him. She said this, however, so that her fame would remain in the land and not be overshadowed by that of Apollo. The god wandered on to Crisa and the ravine of Parnassus, and the site found favour in his eyes. 'Here,' he said, 'will I build my temple, a place of oracles for men who will bring me offerings, and all who live in the Peloponnese, Europe and the islands will come to hear the oracles and I will give them honest advice in my rich temple.' He then laid the foundations of the sacred building by a spring where dwelt the huge dragon, Python. This hideous monster, which had already devoured many men and beasts, had once reared Typhaon, whom Hera had born in anger. Apollo struck it with his arrow and with a loud roar it died, writhing on the earth to the delight of the god. The place was called Pytho, either after the name of the dragon or signifying the corruption of the body of the dead monster. Then Apollo built the great temple with the help of the builders, Trophonius and Agamedes, the sons of Erginus. When they had completed the work they asked the god for their wages and

he promised that he would pay them on the seventh day. In the meantime they were to be of good cheer. They did as he had ordered and on the seventh day they fell asleep never to wake again.

Apollo, however, was angry with the nymph, Telphusa, because of her counsel which had diverted him from her domain. He therefore closed up the source beneath a hail of stones and rocks, raising an altar above it where in future he was worshipped as Apollo Telphusius.

As Apollo was wondering whom he should employ as a priest and announcer of his oracles, he saw in the distance a heavily laden ship coming from Crete on its way to Pylus with a Cretan crew. He hurried towards it in the form of a dolphin and lay down on the deck until the beams of the vessel shook and the men were filled with terror. When they rounded Cape Malea and tried to land off the foothills of Taenarum, where the sacred herds of Helios grazed, they could not steer the ship, for the winds sent by Apollo drove them round the Peloponnese past Pylus and the Ionian islands into the bay of Crisa where it beached. On the instructions of the god the Cretans raised an altar and sacrificed to the gods, and Apollo made his presence known. From now on he would use the surname Delphinus since he had led them there in the guise of a dolphin. As soon as the sacrifice had been made the god took his lyre and led the troop up to Pytho to their future abode near the shrine of the god. When they saw the barren, rocky wilderness they feared for their survival. But the god consoled them and pronounced his first oracle. 'Be of good heart. Men will always bring you rich gifts when they come to hear the wisdom of the god. But you, the priests, are to refrain from unjust words or deeds. If you grow arrogant others will come and wrest the power from you by force.'

Aeschylus has a different version of the dolphin shrine. According to him the first soothsayer here was Ge, the earth goddess herself, followed by her daughter, Themis, who was replaced with her consent and without violence by another Titaness, Phoebe. The latter gave the oracle to Apollo as a birthday gift and he was called Phoebus in memory of her name. Apollo then journeyed from Delos across Attica to Parnassus

where the Athenians prepared the way for him. Delphus, the prince of the country, welcomed the god and Zeus appointed Apollo as the fourth owner of the oracle shrine, to announce the will of Zeus, his father.

For Zeus loved his son and Apollo spoke with the voice of Zeus. The god with the silver bow also spoke to the Spartans. 'The rulers shall be kings beloved of the gods, the first-born elders and then men of the race. They shall proclaim the good and act with justice. Then victory and strength will be the reward of this race.'

Apollo's favourites, however, were the Hyperboreans, who lived in the farthest north of the border of Oceanus, in a land which could be reached neither by ship nor on foot. Only Perseus visited them once in company with Athene and caroused with them when they sacrificed an ass to Apollo. The god often spent some time with them. They led a carefree existence, knowing neither disease nor old age.

The soothsayer race of the Iamids at Olympia could trace their family tree back to Apollo. At Eurotus in Lacedaemon, Pitane bore Poseidon a daughter, Evadne, whom she sent to be raised by Aepytus, Prince of Arcadia. Evadne grew up on the banks of the Alpheus and enjoyed the first sweets of love in the arms of Apollo. When her foster-father discovered that she was expecting a child he travelled to Delphi to question the god. In the meantime Evadne gave birth to a boy, and although it pained her greatly she hid him in the undergrowth among the reeds and the violets. There two serpents sent by the gods fed him with honey. When the prince returned from Delphi he questioned everyone about the boy whom Evadne had delivered, for in Delphi he had learned that the child was the son of Apollo. He would become a seer and the founder of a great race. But no one knew anything about him. Finally he was discovered at the spot where he was hidden and brought back home. The boy grew up and was called Iamus. On one occasion he went down by night into the waters of the Alpheus and called upon his grandfather, Poseidon, and his father, Apollo, to give him some office for the good of man. Apollo favoured him with the gift of soothsaying and placed him in Olympia as founder of the prophesying race of the Iamids.

Apollo was also the leader of the Muses' chorus. Of him the poet Pindar sings:

'O Golden Lyre, who art Phoebe's treasure
Which he shares with the dusk-haired Song-queens aye,
The light feet hear thee beating the measure
As the revellers marshal their dance-array.
O Lyre, thy signals the singers obey
When in preludes of choral song low-dreaming
O'er thy strings quick-throbbing the harmonies glide.
Thou quenchest the thunderbolt's self red-gleaming
Javelined with flame-jets aye outstreaming
On the sceptre of Zeus the slumber-tide
O'er his eagle ripples, on either side
Of the king of birds as his pinions are trailing:
O'er his bowing head doth a dark mist flow
Sweet-sealing his eyes; 'neath sleep's prevailing
His back heaves wave-like soft and slow,
Spell-bound by thy melodies pulsing low.
Yea, the soul of the wild War-god lies sleeping
Hushed, warm-cradled in slumber's nest,
And his keen spear slips from his strong hand's keeping.
God's hearts are thy shafts in enchantment steeping
By the inspiration of Phoebus to rest
Lulled, and by the deep-bosomed Muses' behest.'

Pindar: *Pythian Odes*, I, 1-15

Things turned out badly for the satyr, Marsyas, when he challenged Apollo to a musical contest. Athene had played the flute and thrown it away in disgust when she saw that her cheeks grew puffed as she blew it. Marsyas had found this flute and preferred it to Apollo's lyre. He made ready for the contest and the victor was to do as he pleased with the vanquished. The victorious god flayed the unfortunate Marsyas alive and suspended him as an eternal warning in the cave of Celaenae in Phrygia where the contest had taken place.

Apollo was also a warlike god, and like his sister, Artemis, an expert with the bow and arrow. This brother and sister defended their mother Leto from the attacks of Tityus. The latter was a

son of Ge or, according to another version, of Elara and Zeus. When Elara was expecting this child she hid Zeus in the earth for fear of Hera's jealousy and the newborn baby, Tityus, rose from the soil, a powerful giant. When Leto was on her way from the city of Panopeus in Phocis to Delphi, Tityus tried to attack her. Upon this her children, Apollo and Artemis, hurried to her aid and killed the giant. He was punished in the underworld, pinned to the ground in chains while two vultures tore at his liver.

When Niobe, the daughter of Tantalus, boasted of having six sons and six daughters whereas Leto had only produced two children, Apollo and Artemis grew angry and killed all the children of this mortal on account of her arrogance. For nine days they lay there and no one buried them, for Zeus had turned them all to stone. Finally the gods relented and buried them, and Niobe, herself changed into a rock in the lonely mountains of Sipylus where the nymphs rest from their dancing, felt for ever the sufferings inflicted upon her by the gods.

Artemis was the chaste virgin goddess who delighted in hunting on the windswept heights and the shadowy mountains, shooting her arrows at stag and boars, accompanied by nymphs, and dancing roundelays to the strains of the lute. Aphrodite was never able to obtain power over her. She also demanded chastity from her retinue. She punished severely one of her companions, Callisto, the daughter of Lycaon, who gave her love to Zeus. When Artemis discovered that she was expecting a child the infuriated goddess turned her into a female bear. She taught youths the art of the chase, for example the Trojan, Scamandrius, just as her brother, Apollo, taught Calchas the art of prophecy. He became the Greek seer at Troy.

ASCLEPIUS

ONE of Apollo's sons was Asclepius, the doctor and god of healing. Once upon a time King Phlegyas ruled in Thessaly over a race named after him, the Phlegyans. His daughter, Coronis, was loved by Apollo, but while she carried the god's child beneath her heart she was unfaithful to him and trafficked in her father's

house with a mortal, Ischys, a stranger from Arcady. To announce this infidelity a raven flew as a messenger to the god at Delphi—at that time all ravens had white plumage—and when Apollo heard the evil news he cursed the bird of ill omen, changed its white feathers to black and dispatched his sister, Artemis, to kill the unfaithful woman and all her tribe with her arrows. But when the corpse of Coronis lay on the funeral pyre Apollo rescued the child from its mother's womb. 'My heart will not allow my child to die a painful death and share in the fate of its mother.' He gave the little boy to Chiron to educate. He was called Asclepius and from the centaur learned the art of healing. In future he was able to heal many sick persons. Once, however, he abused his art and raised a dead man to life. For this Zeus killed him with a thunderbolt. Nevertheless he was deified and after his death worshipped as a god. Many pious legends maintain that a host of men were healed in his shrine. His sons were Podalirius and Machaon, who served as doctors in the Trojan war.

THE CYCLOPES

SINCE the thunderbolt with which Zeus slayed Asclepius had been forged by the three Cyclopes, the sons of Ge, Apollo killed them in order to avenge his son. But he himself had to do penance for this and spend a year in the service of Admetus.

But there were other Cyclopes who won renown by their works. Some built the walls of Mycenae and Tiryns from huge blocks of stone, and others dwelt on the island where Odysseus landed on his return journey from Troy.

HERMES

ZEUS visited Maia, the daughter of Atlas, one of the seven Pleiades, in a grotto in the Cyllenean Mountains in Arcady, and she presented him with a son, Hermes, the messenger of the gods and cunning friend of Thebes. On the very morning of his birth he went in search of his brother, Apollo's, cattle. On leaving the

cave he found a tortoise and saw immediately how this creature could be of use to him. He took it inside, killed it and from its shell, some bamboo rods, the hide of a cow and the entrails of sheep made a seven-stringed lyre, an original invention, and immediately began to sing to its notes. Then he hid it in his cradle and, hungry for meat, set out to commit his theft. Night was falling as he left the cave on his way to Pieria near Olympus where the cattle of the gods grazed. Hermes drove off fifty of the cows which belonged to Apollo. He walked backwards compelling the herd to do likewise so that all their tracks should lead to the meadow. On the way, at Onchestus, he met an old peasant who was tending his vines and warned him to tell no one of what he had seen and heard. He continued to drive his herd and next morning reached the Alpheus in Elis where he hid the beasts in a cave near Pylos. He slaughtered two cows and divided their meat into twelve sacrificial portions. He spread out the skins to dry on a rock and cooked the meat on wooden spits. Although the pleasant odour assailed his nostrils he did not taste of the meat but laid the offerings back in the cave, erased all traces of his presence and unobserved slipped back to Cyllene. In the early morning he crept back secretly through the keyhole into his cradle.

But Maia had noticed his departure and called her little son to account. The boy refused to speak and in the midst of this squabble Apollo entered the cave. He had discovered the theft of his cattle and had been given further details by the peasant in Onchestus. The man had seen a boy driving the cattle backwards, but he knew nothing more. A bird gave Apollo further information and revealed that a son of Zeus was the thief. So he came to Pylos where he saw the traces of the cattle and eventually to the cave in Cyllene. The infant Hermes, who had been so stubborn with his mother, cowered in his cradle with his lyre under his arm on seeing the anger of his big brother. Apollo searched the entire cave and since he found no trace of the cows he threatened Hermes with Tartarus if he did not reveal their whereabouts. But the little boy still refused to speak. Both of them, therefore, went to Olympus to lay their case before Zeus. Here, too, when Apollo lodged his complaint Hermes denied everything. How could he, a new-born baby, do such a thing?

Zeus realized that the child was lying and with a laugh ordered him to lead Apollo to the place where he had hidden the cattle. Hermes obeyed, led his brother to the Alpheus and showed him the cows. They were reconciled. Hermes played the lyre which he had made and sang to its accompaniment. Apollo was full of admiration for this new discovery and was given it in compensation for the cows which he gave to Hermes. At the same time he presented him with a flail to denote that he was the master of the herd. In this way Apollo, the leader of the Muses, obtained the lyre which brings joy, love and sweet repose. Hermes made himself a flute and swore to his brother that he would never steal from him again. Apollo presented him with the golden staff, the ceryceion or herald's staff, which bestowed good fortune and wealth and with which Hermes could put men to sleep and reawaken them.

One of the sons of Hermes was called Eudorus, the 'generous spender'. The god had once cast the eyes of desire on Polymele, the beautiful daughter of the Myrmidon prince, Philas, as she sang in the choir of virgins in honour of Artemis. He visited her secretly in her apartment and embraced her. She gave birth to Eudorus, 'The Virgin's Son', who was brought up by his grandfather, Phylas, and became one of the Myrmidon leaders at Troy. Hermes had many more children, the most famous of all being Pan.

PAN

IN the Cyllenean Mountains in Arcady Hermes, disguised as a goatherd, dallied with a mortal maiden, the daughter of Dryops. His heart was inflamed with love for this girl. She presented him with a very strange-looking son, equipped with goat's feet and horns and very prone to shout and laugh. His mother, distressed by this bearded monster, fled from him in terror. Hermes, however, took him in his arms and was delighted with the saucy child. Wrapping him in a hareskin he brought him to Olympus where Zeus and the other gods were all charmed with him—especially Dionysus. He was called Pan because everyone loved him. Forests, lonely meadows and sheer cliffs were his abode. There he dwelt with the dancing nymphs, guarded the herds, went

hunting and returned home at night with his catch. He played on his flute more beautifully than any bird could sing. The nymphs gathered round him near the spring and danced and sang until their cries echoed in the mountains. And Pan danced with them dressed in a lynx skin.

NYMPHS AND SATYRS

NYMPHS and satyrs peopled the forests and meadows. The nymphs, who were neither gods nor humans, enjoyed longevity and the food of the gods. They danced with the gods, went hunting with Artemis and wantoned with the satyrs and Hermes in the lush grottoes. They dwelt in the mountains, forests, valleys, meadows and near springs as naiads, oreads, dryads, hamadryads or hyades. Some resided in single trees, and it was also related that with the nymphs on the mountain tops grew tall firs and oaks which could not be felled by mortals because they stood on sacred soil. But when death approached them they withered, the bark peeled and the branches fell. Then the nymph in the tree also died. Of the age of the nymphs it was also told: 'The crow's span of life is nine times that of man, the stag four times that of the crow, the raven three times that of the stag, the phoenix nine times that of the raven and the nymphs, the daughters of Zeus, ten times that of the phoenix.' There were many stories of their love affairs with gods and mortals. When Zeus convened a meeting of the gods on Olympus the nymphs also arrived from their forests, sources and meadows.

The companions of the nymphs were the satyrs, half-animal creatures—some with the ears, tail and hooves of a horse, others half man, half goat. In all other respects they were human. They sported irresponsibly with the maenads in the train of Dionysus, and lived with the beasts. Of one of them, the wise Silenus, the following legend is told. At the foot of Mount Bermion in Macedonia lay the gardens of Midas where the sixty-leaved roses perfumed the air. Here Midas caught Silenus when he was drinking at a spring by mixing wine in the water so that he could bind him in his drunkenness. Midas questioned him and learned

the saw: 'The best thing for man is not to be born, but should he be born then it is better for him to die as quickly as possible.'

DIONYSUS

PAN, the nymphs, and the satyrs formed the train of Dionysus. The women of Elis invoked the gods in a hymn which dates from time immemorial:

'Dionysus, the Clamour-king, first do I sing, the ivy-crowned,
Glorious scion of Zeus and of Semele world-renowned,
Who was nursed by the bright-haired Nymphs, whose bosoms
received him of old

From his sire, Heaven's King; and with tenderest care in a
mountain-fold

Of Nysa they reared him; and there by the will of the Father
the son

In an odorous cave grew up, of the Deathless accounted one.
So when they had nurtured the God who in many a hymn is
sung,

Then was he wont to wander the forest-glades among
With ivy and bay overdressed; followed ever the Nymphs at
the side

Of their leader; and rang with their clamour the vast wood
far and wide.

All hail, Dionysus, the cluster-laden! Vouchsafe that we
Rejoicing may yet come again in thy vintage-season to thee,
And from season to season still through many a year to be.'

Homeric Hymn 7

Dionysus was the son of Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, King of Thebes, and Harmonia. The great beauty of the princess aroused the love of Zeus and he visited her on several occasions in human form. This aroused the jealousy of Hera and she decided to encompass the ruin of her rival. Disguised as a trusted servant of the king's daughter, she persuaded her to demand from Zeus the next time he appeared that he should come to her in his divinity as when he embraced Hera. When the god came next time to her apartment she craved a boon, and when Zeus

gave his promise she asked of him what Hera had suggested. Zeus knew that a mortal could not bear the sight of a god, but since he was bound by his oath he revealed himself to her in a thunderclap and lightning flash. Semele was destroyed by the fire, but Zeus saved the fruit of her womb and, unobserved by Hera, sewed it into his own thigh.

In due course the new-born baby, Dionysus, was given to the nymphs who brought him up in Nysa. The boy wandered about the wooded gorges crowned with ivy and laurel. The nymphs followed him and there was great roistering in the depth of the forest. Soon other half-bestial creatures joined him from the fields and the woods, satyrs, fauns and centaurs, for Dionysus knew how to ferment wine from grapes. He presented this new drink to his friends, who now knew for the first time intoxication and the exciting effects of his potion.

But the young god also had enemies. Lycurgus, for example, the son of Dryas, chased the maenads, the nurses and friends of the lusty Dionysus round the meadows of Nysa until in terror they threw away their thyrses before their murderous pursuer. Even Dionysus fled, dived into the sea and hid himself trembling in the lap of Thetis. But the gods were furious with Lycurgus and Zeus struck him with blindness. He did not remain alive very long, for he was hated by all the gods. In gratitude for having received him Dionysus presented Thetis with a golden urn, the work of Hephaestus, in which later she placed the ashes of her son, Achilles.

Since all men wished to participate in the gifts of Dionysus he travelled round the world teaching the vintner's art and being alternately welcomed or hunted. On his wanderings he also came to Attica where the peasant, Icarius, gave the stranger hospitality. In gratitude the god presented him with a vine stock, taught him how to plant his vineyard and how to tend it, so that this land enjoyed the produce of the grape. But Icarius once allowed his shepherds to drink of the wine and in their drunken frenzy they slew their host and burnt his corpse to ashes, for they thought that he had poisoned them. His daughter, Erigone, who went in search of her father, hanged herself on the tree beneath which he was buried.

Over land and sea continued the journey of the god, who,

sometimes alone, sometimes followed by a noisy crew, distributed his gifts and taught his mysteries. On the shore of an island he was once met by a handsome youth, a Tyrrhenian pirate. On account of his rich clothing he was mistaken for a king's son, taken on board the ship and held prisoner. But when they tried to bind his feet with willows the bonds fell from him and he sat down with a smile. At this the helmsman said: 'So you would try to bind a god and carry him off? He is either Zeus, or Apollo or Poseidon. He bears no resemblance to a mortal and must be one of the eternal gods. Let us put him ashore so that he does not whip up the storm and the sea against us.' But the master of the ship replied angrily: 'Pay attention to the wind and take in sail. The prisoner probably comes from Egypt or Cyprus, or perhaps from the land of the Hyperboreans. We will find out from him what is his country of origin.' The ship continued to sail with the wind but suddenly a great miracle occurred. Sweet wine oozed from the timbers, filling the vessel with its odour, bunches of grapes and ivy trailed round the mast, sails and rigging and even the thole pins were festooned. At this the captain became terrified and called to the helmsman to make for the shore. Dionysus changed his shape and became a roaring lion, and then a she-bear appeared amidships. The lion mauled the captain and his crew crowded round the helmsman on the poop in their terror. When they observed the fate of their captain they jumped overboard and were turned into dolphins. But the god spoke to the helmsman: 'Be of good cheer. I am well disposed towards you. I am Dionysus whom Cadmus' daughter, Semele, bore in love of Zeus.'

After long wanderings Dionysus returned to his homeland after visiting Asia and travelling as far as Bactria and Arabia. Here in Thebes lived his grandfather, Cadmus. The king of the city was Pentheus, the grandson of Cadmus and son of Agave. Dionysus intended to introduce his mysteries into the city of his father, but he came up against resistance. His divinity was not believed and there was a rumour that Semele, seduced by a mortal, had given birth to Dionysus and to justify her guilt foisted the paternity on Zeus. But the god's power proved irresistible. He filled the Theban women, above all his maternal aunts Ino, Autonoë and the mother of Pentheus, Agave, with

divine fury until they wandered orgiastically like maenads through the woods. But Pentheus wanted to keep this new strange cult from his people and imprisoned the demented women whenever he could catch them. But their bonds fell from them, the doors of the prison opened of their own accord and the prisoners swarmed out into freedom. To discover the cause of their urge and to bring them back under duress, the king dressed up in woman's clothes and was bemused by the god in the forest where he had gone to see what was forbidden to see. The maenads, among them his own mother, discovered him as he watched their activities from the top of a fir. They uprooted the tree and tore this enemy of the god to pieces.

Time and time again Dionysus had to compete with resistance as he did with the daughters of Proetus of Tiryns, who would not accept his consecration and as a result were driven mad. The three daughters of Minyas, the King of Orchomenus in Boeotia, also refused to accept the mysteries of the new god and while the other women caroused with Dionysus in the mountains they remained at home chastely at their looms and housework. Then the god appeared to them in the shape of a young girl and demanded that they should take part in the mysteries. When they refused the god changed into a savage bull, a lion and a panther while nectar and milk flowed from the frames of the looms. Terror then took hold of the daughters of Minyas and in their frenzy they tore to pieces the son of one and rushed into the mountains, plucking ivy and laurel, until Hermes tranquillized them with his staff and turned them into night birds that flee from the light of the sun.

A roving god of this nature was ideal for love, but certainly not created for marriage. On one occasion, however, he fell deeply in love with the beautiful Ariadne, daughter of King Minos of Crete. She became his wife and Zeus granted her immortality and eternal youth. Another version maintained that she was unfaithful to the god with Theseus, the son of the King of Athens, and fled with him to Athens. She was killed by Artemis on the island of Dia when Dionysus discovered her infidelity. One son of Dionysus and Ariadne was Oenopion, the king of the wine-loving island, Chios, and another Thoas of Lemnos, the father of Hypsipyle and Staphylus, of whom we shall hear later.

CENTAURS

THE centaurs sometimes roistered in the train of Dionysus. They were four-legged creatures, the lower part of their body being that of a horse with the torso and head of a man. They lived in the mountains and the woods, particularly in Thessaly, the Peloponnese and Aetolia. Savage, boorish creatures who fought with uprooted trees and stones, they lived off the raw meat of captured beasts and were very partial to wine. There is a story of a great battle between the centaurs and the Lapithae, a Thessalian race. At the marriage of Pirithous and Hippodamia their relatives, the centaurs, who had been invited to the feast, heated with wine started a drunken drawl and tried to rape the bride. In particular the centaur, Eurytion. The Lapithae cut off his ears and nose and a terrible battle ensued resulting in a lasting feud between the two races. The young Nestor of Pylos took part in this war on the side of the Lapithae, as did Theseus. On the side of the Lapithae in this battle Caineus also distinguished himself. Of him it is told that he was formerly a girl named Cainis whom Poseidon had loved. In return for her love he had granted her wish to be changed into a man. Thus she became Caineus and Poseidon rendered him invulnerable. Since the centaurs could not defeat him they buried him in the earth and covered him with stones and tree trunks until he died of suffocation. Eurytion eventually met his fate: the next time he tried to rape a girl he was killed by Heracles.

The son of Pirithous and Hippodamia was Polypoites, who, with his friend, Leonteus, the son of Corontus, and grandson of Caineus, led the Lapithae in forty ships from Sicily against Troy. Both men attended the funeral games which Achilles gave in honour of Patroclus and Polypoites won the discus-throwing.

Poets sang of the origin of these strange creatures. The father of the Lapithae Pirithous was Ixion, the son of Phlegyas, the first man to murder one of his relatives. On wedding Dia he promised his father-in-law rich marriage gifts. When the latter came to fetch the dowry Ixion built a deep trench in which glowed a fire covered with light wood and sand; the unhappy father-in-law fell into it and was burned. In punishment, however, the murderer went mad and no one would purge him of

his sin because he had committed murder within the family. Zeus, in his compassion, absolved him, for Ixion's wife, Dia, had once been his mistress, and raised him to Olympus. But Ixion behaved badly towards his benefactor. He tried to win the love of Hera. When he tried to embrace her, however, the son of Cronus had prepared a sweet deception and an exquisite torture. In place of Hera he embraced a cloud and as a punishment was bound to a flying wheel to roll eternally through space. From the union of Ixion and the cloud was born a son, Centaurus, who had intercourse with a mare from whom the race of centaurs was born. Thus they had inherited half their body from their father and half from their mother.

Of a very different nature from these wild centaurs was the wise Chiron, who lived in a cave on Mount Pelion. His parents were Cronus and Philyra. It is said that Cronus approached the girl in the guise of a stallion and that the child inherited the equine strain. Chiron was a soothsayer, particularly experienced in the art of healing and full of wisdom. Countless heroes were educated by him in their youth, to mention but a few: Asclepius, Achilles, Jason, Actaeon and Aristaeus. The marriage of Peleus and Thetis was celebrated at his house. From Chiron also stemmed the huge spear made of ash which Achilles used at Troy.

THE GIANTS

MORTAL creatures like the centaurs were the giants, related to men but of enormous height and power, a people of primitive times and hostile to the gods. The earth, fructified by the blood of Uranus, had given birth to them. From an oracle the gods knew that the giants could never be destroyed by them unless a mortal helped them. But Ge, Mother Earth, has also learned of this oracle and sought some means to prevent her children being killed by a mortal. Zeus banished all these evil creatures into darkness and called upon Heracles for help against the monsters. With his support they were vanquished and killed in a grim battle in which all the gods and goddesses took part. The battlefield, Phlegra, where the encounter took place was reputed to have been Pallene, the western peninsula of Chalcidice.

The king of the giants was Eurymedon, who suffered the same fate as his race. His daughter, Periboia, gave birth to Nausithous, the father being Poseidon, the sea god. He became King of the Phaeacians who at that time lived in Hyperia and were neighbours of the Cyclopes. But since they were oppressed by the ebullient and more powerful Titans they left their land under the leadership of Nausithous and settled in Scheria, far from man. Nausithous had two sons, Rhexenor and Alcinous. The former died young without male issue, killed by the arrows of Apollo. Alcinous, the ruler of the Phaeacians at the time of Odysseus, married the daughter of his brother, Arete, and their daughter was Nausicaa.

We know the names of many more giants, such as Enceladus, who was killed in battle by Athene, Zeus or Dionysus; Mimas, the foe of Zeus, who gave his name to a mountain on the Ionian coast of Asia Minor; Porphyryon, also destroyed by Apollo's arrows; Polybotes, whom Poseidon chased across the sea. The sea god prised off part of the island of Cos with his trident and slung it at the giant, the fragment forming the island Nisyros. Alcioneus who was killed by Heracles in single combat on Pallene, was also a giant.

THE BATTLE OF THE GODS

BOTH gods and goddesses were as warlike as humans in the heroic age and they intervened in the battles of mortals. During the Trojan war they constantly took part in the fighting and became so heated in the fray that they occasionally used their weapons against each other although they were all closely related. The day that Achilles fought in the waters of the Scamander and the river god was in dire distress from the fire of Hephaestus, all the gods and goddesses joined in battle.

'But when the Olympians enter'd the mellay of war,
Uprose in her might fell Discord, wakener of hosts;
And Athena, standing at whiles by the trench of the wall,
Utter'd her shout, and at whiles on the echoing shores,
And Ares shouted against her loud as a storm
Cheering the Trojans on from the citadel's height
Or the ridge of Callicolone, running at speed.

And so the blessed Immortals fury awak'd
 In the hosts and ruinous strife let loose in their midst,
 And terribly thunder'd the Father of Gods and of men
 From Heaven above, and Poseidon shook from beneath
 The limitless earth and the mountain precipices,
 And fountain'd Ida in every summit and spur
 Quak'd, and the city of Troy and the Danaan ships;
 And Hades, Lord of the shades, had terror in Hell
 And leapt from his throne and shouted in terror aloud
 Lest Poseidon the world o'er his head should shatter and split
 And his realm to the eyes of Immortals and mortals reveal,
 Horrible, dreary, that even by Gods is abhorr'd.
 So loud was the roar that arose from the strife of the Gods:'

Iliad, XXI, 385f

Ares dived upon his old enemy, Athene, and ran his lance against the Aegis. In vain, for not even the thunderbolt of Zeus was of avail against it. Athene felled him with a huge rock and when Hera saw Aphrodite carrying the wounded man away she incited Athene against this 'gadfly' and Athene struck her sister in the breast so that she fell with Ares. Poseidon, who was on the side of the Achaeans, challenged Apollo, who supported the Trojans. They, too, he said, should now enter the fray. But Apollo was loth to fight against his uncle and avoided the issue. Artemis upbraided him with harsh words, but Hera leaped on the 'shameless bitch', tore her bow and quiver from her shoulder, struck her over the head with the weapon so that the arrows fell out and the daughter of Zeus ran away weeping, like a dove pursued by a hawk. Then Hermes spoke to Leto, their mother, and said that he wanted to avoid the battle for it was terrible to fight with the wives of Zeus. 'Boast only in the circle of the gods that you defeated me by brute force.' Then Leto picked up her daughter's bows and arrows and hurried to Olympus where Artemis was complaining to her father:

'It was your wife Hera, Father, who has been beating me, it is always her doing when there is any quarrelling among the immortals.'

Iliad, XXI, 511-513

At last Apollo went to Ilium to summon the remaining gods to Olympus, some full of anger, others crowing over their victory.

PART TWO

The Heroes

THE FIRST MEN

THE FIVE AGES

THE first men on earth created by the gods lived in the Golden Age under the rule of Cronus. They lived the same carefree lives as the gods—without care, sorrow or distress, and without ageing. When they died it was as though they went to sleep. The earth bore fruit in great plenty without husbandry. When this race died out, in accordance with the plans of Zeus they became Guardian Spirits for mortals; wandering invisible about the earth they controlled good and evil deeds and distributed wealth.

Then the gods created a second race, more mediocre than the first: the Silver Age, resembling neither in stature nor sentiment the men of the Golden Age. For a hundred years any child born of this race remained at home with its mother, and when at last it grew up it lived but for a short time in suffering and ignorance, in conflict with its kin and with no respect for the gods. Zeus in his anger rooted out this race and they became the spirits of the underworld honoured by men of later ages.

Thereupon Zeus created a third race from the ash, the Bronze Age. Unlike the Silver they were violent, strong and warlike creatures, despising the fruits of the earth, hardy and endowed with mighty fists. Their weapons, houses and utensils were of bronze, for as yet there was no iron. Victims of their own hands they went down without fame into Hades.

When the earth had also swallowed this race, Zeus created a fourth, more just and noble—the Heroic Age, heroes who were also demi-gods. War exterminated them below the walls of

Thebes with the Seven Gates, or beyond the sea at Troy. For them Zeus reserved another life after death, far from men at the ends of the earth, on the Islands of the Blest. There the heroes lived a happy life by Oceanus, under the rule of Cronus, and the earth provided them with three harvests a year.

Then came the fifth race—the Iron Age—which is the present, and which suffered distress and sorrow day and night. The gods plagued the men of this race, for they were a mixture of good and evil. Zeus was also to destroy this race if they began to grow grey hairs at birth. It would grow even worse in the future. There would be no more friendship between fathers and sons, between host and guest, or among brothers as in the old days. Now they no longer respected their grey-haired elders but insulted them with lack of gratitude and hard words. Impious creatures who had no fear of the gods. Neither the oath nor good deeds were valid any longer and evildoers and criminals received honour. There was no justice in the land and might alone ruled. The evil deceived the good with false words and set the seal on their false words with oaths. These wretched men were all subject to envy. Honour and justice departed from the earth to the gods in Olympus, men sank in their suffering and could do nothing to avert the evil. Of these men of the present age the poet sang:

‘Thus did the Gods determine the fate of wretched man:
To live in constant care: the Gods alone are free from cares.
Two vessels filled with gifts stand in Cronus’ halls:
The one is filled with evil, the second with good.
Zeus, the thunderer mixes them and the portion of one
is evil and that of his fellow is good.
The unhappy mortal whose lot is evil falls in disgrace.
Misery dogs his footsteps over the face of the earth
and he wanders in his distress, despised by Gods and men.’

Hesiod: *Works and Days*, 108f

THE ANCESTRY OF MEN

MORTALS were the issue of the Titans and thus, like the gods, they could trace their ancestry back to Uranus and Ge. As the poet Pindar sang:

'One is the race of men, and one the race of Gods; but they
And we alike are children of the same Earth-mother's
womb.

Yet some Power wholly diverse sunders us: we fade away
To nought, but evermore abides their heaven's brazen
dome,
Through all the years, the eternal years, their never-shaken
home.

Yet have we something in us like the Gods, the everlasting—
It may be this our mighty mind, our nature it may be—
Yet know we not what course by day, or 'neath night's wings
on-hasting
Is marked out, for our feet to run therein, by Destiny.'

Pindar: *Nemean Odes*, 6, 1f

Most of the hero races trace their origin back to the Titans, Oceanus and Iapetus. The family trees split into two branches: the one founded by the sons of Oceanus, the river gods Inachus and Asopus, and the second by the sons of Iapetus, Prometheus and Atlas. In addition to these main family trees there were important families such as the Tantalids, the race of Odysseus and the Attic royal lines which were related by marriage to the other races. A few of the heroes were autochthonous, such as the Attic heroes Cecrops and Erechtheus, the forefather of Tantalus.

PHORONEUS

THE first man and father of mortals was called Phoroneus, a son of the Argive river god, Inachus, son of Oceanus. Living in Argolis he is supposed to have given men fire and morality, and advanced them from their animal life. He also founded the cult of Hera. At first the goddess was worshipped in the form of a pillar until Peires (Peiras or Peiranthus) dedicated a wooden sculpture to her. Trochilus, the son of Callithoë (or Callithyia), the first priestess of Hera, invented the chariot, and the sorcerer giants of Mount Ida, used the newly discovered fire to forge iron weapons and utensils. A daughter of Phoroneus was Niobe, the first mortal lover of Zeus, to whom she bore two sons, Argus and Pelasgus. A source in Argolis was named after her. The grand-

children of Phoroneus include the mountain nymphs, the host of good-for-nothing satyrs and the Curetes who loved the dance.

PELASGUS, LYCAON

THE Arcadians had a different tradition. According to them Pelasgus, the founder of the Pelasgians, sprang from the earth in their land as the first man and founder of the Arcadian race. He ruled there for a long time as king, taught his subjects to build huts, to make clothes from sheepskins and to eat acorns. His son was Lycaon, of whom the Arcadians related that, following in his father's footsteps, he made many new useful discoveries. Among other things he taught his subjects how to build cities and founded the oldest town in Arcadia, Lycosura, where Zeus was worshipped as Zeus Lycaeus. But when he sacrificed a child on the altar he was turned into a wolf. His fifty sons were also founders of cities. There are, however, other legends of Lycaon and his fifty sons. They are reported to have exceeded all other men in impiety and godlessness. In order to test them Zeus appeared one day in the guise of a simple man. They invited him to a banquet, slaughtered a boy, mixed his flesh with the meat of the sacrifice and offered it to their guest. Upon this Zeus overturned the table, killed Lycaon and all his sons with lightning with the exception of Nyctimus, whom he spared on the plea of Ge so that he could rule the kingdom as the successor of Lycaon.

IO, EPAPHUS

FROM the race of the Argives also stemmed Io, whose father was called Inachus or Peires. Io was the priestess of Hera. Her beauty inflamed Zeus and he consorted with her. When Hera noticed this she changed her priestess into a cow and ordered Argus Panoptes—her all-seeing herdsman who had four eyes in front and four behind and never slept—to watch her. In some versions Argus Panoptes was credited with a hundred eyes.

There is also another story. When Hera discovered Zeus' love for Io he turned the girl into a cow and swore to Hera on oath that he had never had intercourse with her. Then the goddess

begged the cow from Zeus and placed Argus to watch over her. But Argus was killed by Hermes at the behest of Zeus. Thereupon Hera sent a gadfly to torment the cow and to drive her over the earth far from her homeland. In her mad course she came to the barren land of the Scythians where Prometheus was bound to a cliff. She told the Titan of her fate and the chained giant directed her on her way which eventually led to Egypt. There her madness was taken from her, Zeus pacified her and from their union Epaphus was born.

Epaphus became King of Egypt and a daughter was born to him, Libye, from whom the land of Libya is named. Libye, by presenting Poseidon with two sons, Agenor and Belus, became the ancestress of the second famous race. The descendants of the elder, the Agenorids, belonged to the royal race originating with Cadmus of Thebes, and from the issue of Belus came the Danaids, famous descendants of whom were Perseus and Heracles.

THE BELIDS TO PERSEUS

THE DANAIDS

BELUS ruled in Egypt and Anchinoë, the daughter of Nilus, bore him twin sons, Aegyptus and Danaus. Aegyptus had fifty sons and Danaus fifty daughters. Growing up together the Aegyptiades wanted to marry the girls, but the latter, disgusted by the idea of marrying their cousins, left Egypt with their father and fled to Argolis, the home of the ancestress, Io. The King of Argos took in the refugees, but the sons of Aegyptus pursued them and insisted on marrying them. Each of the sons of Aegyptus was promised a Danaid for his wife. But Danaus gave each of his daughters a dagger and on their wedding night they murdered their husbands. Only the youngest, Hypermnestra, spared Lynceus and this couple became the founders of the royal house that later ruled in Argos. For his remaining daughters Danaus contrived a speedy marriage. He arranged a race and according to the order in which the suitors passed the post, they could make their choice.

Lynceus and Hypermnestra produced Abas who had twin sons, Acrisius and Proetus. The brothers started to squabble in their mother's womb, becoming even more bitter enemies as they grew up, until Acrisius finally drove Proetus from Argos. The latter fled to Lycia where he married the daughter of King Iobates, Anteia (or Stheneboia). With the aid of his father-in-law and the Lycian army he returned to his former home and in future the land was shared by the two brothers: Acrisius retained Argos and Proetus Tiryns. The Cyclopes fortified the city of Tiryns with gigantic walls.

PERSEUS

ACRISIUS had a single child, a daughter, Danaë. When he consulted the oracle in Delphi about a male heir he received the reply that he would have none, but that his daughter would give birth to a son at whose hands he himself would die. The king, therefore, built in the courtyard of his palace an underground apartment in which he confined his daughter, and left her in charge of a handmaiden. Zeus, however, fell in love with the king's daughter and entered the underground room through the roof in the form of golden rain which entered Danaë's womb, and the god revealed himself as the father of her future son. In this manner Perseus was born, and Danaë and her handmaiden hid him in the underground chamber from Acrisius. After three or four years the king heard the laughter of a child beneath the earth. Summoning his daughter and the maid he immediately killed the latter. He took his daughter and the child, however, to the altar of the house which was dedicated to Zeus and asked her about the origin of the child. When she cited Zeus as the father he did not believe her, but locked her with the boy in a chest and flung them into the sea. Near the island of Seriphos the mother and child were caught in the net of a fisherman named Dictys, the son of Peristhenes, and brought ashore. Danaë told him of her origin. She and her child were welcomed as relatives, for Dictys could trace his family tree back to a daughter of Danaus, Amymone.

The brother of Dictys, Polydectes, was king of the island. He fell in love with Danaë but was rejected in favour of Perseus, who was now a tall youth. One day at a banquet, to which the king had also invited Perseus, each of the guests was to offer the king a gift. When Perseus arrogantly insisted that he would not hesitate even if the king asked from him the head of the Gorgon, Polydectes accepted a horse from the other guests but told Perseus that unless he brought him the head of the Gorgon he would take his mother as a gift. Greatly distressed Perseus went to the other end of the island and while he sat there in his loneliness Hermes approached and asked him the cause of his grief. On learning the story the god promised to help him.

There were in fact three Gorgons, the daughters of Phorcys

and Ceto, and they lived at the end of the earth beyond Oceanus. One of them, Medusa, was mortal but the other two, Sthenno and Euryale, were immortal. Their sisters were the Graiae, the old women who had been born with white hair. The three crones possessed only one eye and one tooth between them. Perseus, guided by Hermes, must visit these old women and then call upon Athene. He took away their eye and their tooth promising to return them on one condition—that they show him the way to the nymphs who possessed the helmet to render him invisible, the winged sandals and a satchel. The Graiae showed him the way and Perseus visited the nymphs who presented him with these miraculous gifts. He bound the winged sandals to his feet, donned the helmet of invisibility and shouldered the satchel. From Hermes he received in addition a steel scythe. Flying through the air, accompanied by Hermes and Athene, he crossed the ocean and came to the Gorgons. Anyone who looked upon these monsters was turned into stone. Perseus found them asleep and, following the instructions of his patrons, he cut off the head of Medusa, who was lying in the middle, looking away from her into a polished mirror in which he could see only her reflection. From the belly of Medusa sprang the winged horse, Pegasus, and Chrysaor, the child conceived by Poseidon. Perseus placed the head of Medusa in his satchel and with the help of his winged sandals and helmet escaped from her two sisters, who pursued the robber but could not see him. The snakes that were wreathed round their heads wailed and whined in loud complaint. When Athene heard these cries she imitated the notes on her flute and in this way discovered fugue.

On his return flight Perseus came to the land of the Ethiopians where King Cepheus ruled. He was a son of Belus and therefore a brother of Aegyptus and Danaus. His wife, Cassiopeia, had boasted that she was more beautiful than the Nereids. In dudgeon these nymphs complained to Poseidon. To punish the boaster, Poseidon sent a flood and a sea monster into the land. An oracle announced the liberation from this bane if Andromeda, the king's daughter, were thrown to the monster as food. The girl was bound to a cliff on the coast. Perseus arrived in time to kill the beast, free the girl and carry her off as his wife.

Perseus then returned to Seriphos to give the Gorgon's head

to the king as he had promised. He found his mother being importuned by Polydectes. When the company were assembled, averting his face, he took the Medusa's head from his satchel, and all those that looked at it were turned to stone. Perseus then gave the head to Athene, who nailed it to her aegis to instil terror in the hearts of her enemies; the satchel, the winged sandals and the helmet of invisibility were given to Hermes who returned them to the nymphs. Before leaving with Danaë and Andromeda for Argos to visit his grandfather, Acrisius, Perseus crowned Dictys king of the island of Seriphos. Acrisius, fearing the oracle, had left the city for Larissa in Thessaly. Perseus followed him and persuaded him to return to Argos. Before they set out, however, Perseus accidentally killed his grandfather with a discus during a contest. In this way the oracle was fulfilled and Perseus returned to Argos.

Andromeda had borne him a son in Ethiopia. Perseus remained with his grandfather and the Persians took their name from him. In Argos further children were born to Perseus including Alcaeus, Electryon and Sthenelus, and a daughter, Gorgophone. In this way Perseus became the ancestor of Heracles, the Dioscuri, Helen and Clytemnestra.

BELLEROPHON

PROETUS, the brother of Acrisius, was King of Tiryns. When Bellerophon, the son of Glaucus, grandson of Sisyphus from Ephyra, visited him, the king's wife, Anteia (also known as Stheneboia) approached the stranger and attempted to seduce him. But Bellerophon repelled her. Full of scorn she cunningly told her husband that he had made advances to her, and demanded that he should kill the guest. Proetus was angry when he heard this but since he shrunk from committing a murder he sent his guest to his father-in-law, Iobates, in Lycia, with a message tantamount to his death-warrant. The King of Lycia received him hospitably for nine days and on the tenth asked him to show the recommendation which he had brought from Proetus. After he had read the grim news he tried to think of a way to rid himself of his guest. He then demanded that Bellerophon should kill the Chimaera, a fire-spitting monster of divine

origin, half-lion, half-dragon with the belly of a goat. It had been reared by Amisodorus and had devoured many victims. The hero, however, managed to kill Chimaera with the aid of the winged horse, Pegasus. Bellerophon had caught this horse by the Peirene spring in Corinth on the advice of Athene, who had appeared to him in a dream and at the same time presented him with a magic, golden halter. As his second labour Iobates dispatched him against the fierce Solymi and the Amazons. When Bellerophon returned victorious he laid an ambush for him consisting of the bravest men in Lycia, but he killed them all. The Lycian king recognized at last the heroism and divine origin of his guest and gave him his daughter as a wife and half his kingdom. To take his revenge Bellerophon later returned to Tiryns, carried off the wife of Proetus on the winged horse, Pegasus, and on the way home dropped her into the sea.

But Bellerophon himself attempted to scale the heavens with his marvellous horse. Since his demand was due to insolent pride, Pegasus threw him and returned to its heavenly manger on Olympus.

THE DAUGHTERS OF PROETUS

THE daughters of Proetus and Stheneboia were so beautiful that suitors came from all over Greece to court them. But they offended Hera by mocking her insignificant temple and were destroyed by the goddess who was jealous of their beauty. Their hair fell out and a rash marred their bodies. In distress they rushed wailing loudly from the city of Tiryns deep into the forest glades of Arcady, where they remained for thirteen long months. Then came their father to Lusus, a brook in Arcady, washed himself and called upon Artemis to free his daughters from their madness in return for an offering of twenty cows. The goddess heard his plea, persuaded Hera to remove her curse and then healed the daughters of Proetus from their madness. In gratitude they erected a shrine to Artemis and she was fêted with round dances. In another version Dionysus inflicted the girls with madness because they had flouted his cult. They wandered through Argolis and Arcady until Melampus, the

seer, promised their father to heal them in return for a third of his land. When Proetus did not agree the disease infected other women. The king was prepared to give way but Melampus now demanded a third of the kingdom for his brother, Bias. Proetus agreed, his daughters were healed by Melampus and he and his brother each married one of them.

HERACLES AND THE HERACLIDS

THE BIRTH AND YOUTH OF HERACLES

IN one of the Homeric hymns in praise of Heracles we read: 'I would sing of Heracles, the son of Zeus, whom Alcmene presented to the All Highest, the God who lives in the clouds. He travelled over land and sea in obedience to Eurystheus performing terrible deeds and undergoing great suffering. Now he lives at ease on snow-decked Olympus throne with Hebe his wife.' Not even Heracles, the favourite of the Cronids, could escape his fate. He, too, was destined to suffer the bitter rancour of Hera. But during his active life Athene gave him aid and protection and later she herself recalled how often she had rescued the hero from danger when he called loudly to heaven and Zeus for aid.

His mother was Alcmene, the daughter of Electryon from Mycenae. The Taphians, led by Pterelaus, once invaded the land of Electryon and drove off his herds of cattle. It came to a battle in which all the sons of Electryon, with the exception of Licymneus, were killed. Amphitryon, the son of Alceus, a nephew of Electryon, managed to recover the herds. But now a quarrel arose between Electryon and Amphitryon over the cattle and the former was killed. The murderer had to leave the country. He fled to Thebes where he found asylum. Alcmene followed him since she had been promised to Amphitryon by her father. They still lived apart, however, in Thebes until he had taken revenge on the Taphians for the death of his brother. While he was on this expedition, far from Thebes, Zeus approached Alcmene in the guise of Amphitryon and spent the night with

her. On the following night her husband returned. As a result Alcmena bore twins, Heracles from Zeus and Iphicles from Amphytrion. Through the cunning of Hera, as we have previously mentioned, it came to pass that Eurystheus, the son of Sthenelus, came into the world before Heracles, so that the hero had to serve him.

Immediately after his birth Hera's hatred, which pursued Heracles throughout his life, became active. When the twins lay in their cradle the goddess sent two snakes through the open door into the sleeping apartments. Heracles raised his head and prepared for his first conflict, strangling both reptiles. The women, who were attending the mother, were frozen with terror. Amphytrion and his companions rushed in fully armed and to their amazement saw what had happened. The seer, Tiresias, foretold the famous deeds which the hero would accomplish and how at last he would marry Hebe and sit at the table of Zeus on Olympus.

When Heracles, as a youth, returned one day after a lion hunt from Cithaeron to Thebes, he met messengers from Erginus, King of the Minyans in Orchomenos, who had come to claim tribute from the Thebans. They had to pay this tribute for the following reason: the father of Erginus, Clymenus, had died of a sling wound caused by the charioteer of the Theban king. On his deathbed he ordered his son to avenge his death. Erginus, therefore, compelled the Thebans at the point of the sword to sign a treaty whereby they would deliver a hundred head of cattle for a period of twenty years. Heracles now met these messengers and cut off their ears and noses, bound their wrists and sent them back to their master at Orchomenos. When Erginus, thirsting for revenge, launched an expedition against Thebes he was defeated by Heracles and the Minyans now had to pay double tribute to the Thebans. In this battle both Erginus and Amphytrion fell. Heracles, as a reward for his bravery, received from Creon, the Theban king, his daughter, Megara, for wife.

Megara bore Heracles several sons, but Hera drove him mad and he killed them all. As a penance he had to enter the service of Eurystheus and perform twelve labours. This had been pre-arranged at his birth by the insidious cunning of Hera. To transmit his orders Eurystheus used the services of Copeus.

Eurystheus was king of Tiryns (and Mycenae) and, as grandson of Perseus, was related to Heracles.

THE TWELVE LABOURS OF HERACLES

As his first task Eurystheus ordered his vassal to bring him the pelt of the Nemean lion. This beast was descended from Orthus, the hound of the giant, Geryon, and the miraculous Chimaera. It had been raised by Hera and sent to the region of Nemea. According to others the lion was a son of the moon goddess, Selene. When Heracles set out to kill the beast he visited a peasant named Molorchus in Cleonae, near Nemea. The peasant wanted to slaughter a beast for sacrifice but Heracles bade him wait thirty days. If he returned sound in limb from the hunt they would sacrifice together to Zeus as their protector, but if he was killed he was to make the offering to him as a hero. Then he sallied forth against the lion which lived in a cave with a double entrance. As soon as Heracles saw the beast he tried to kill it with an arrow, but realizing that it was invulnerable he chased it with his club into the cave and barred the exit. Then he entered the cave, put a stranglehold on the beast and carried it off over his shoulder. He reached Cleonae exactly on the thirtieth day and Molorchus was about to make an offering to the hero. They now made their joint sacrifice to Zeus and Heracles brought his booty back to Mycenae. Eurystheus was so terrified that he forbade him in future to set foot in the city. He was to be shown the results of his labours from outside the gates. He also had bronze shelters built below the ground in which to hide and transmitted his orders in future through Copreus. For the remainder of his life Heracles wore the pelt of the Nemean lion.

The second task which Heracles had to accomplish was the killing of the Lernaean hydra, the water-snake which lived in the marshes of Lerna. She was a daughter of Typhaon and the Echidna and therefore a sister of Orthus and Cerberus, and also of the Nemean lion which Hera, in her implacable hatred, had incited against Heracles. But the hero, on the advice of Athene, destroyed it with bronze weapons with the help of his companion and nephew, Iolaus. This snake had nine heads, one of which

was immortal, and from the marshland caused great damage among the cattle. Heracles drove with Iolaus in his chariot to Lerna, tethered his horses and expelled the snake with burning arrows from its lair. But as soon as he cut off one head two sprouted in its place. In addition, a giant crab appeared which bit him in the foot. After he had killed this he called to his comrade to sear each wound of the cut-off head with firebrands to prevent new heads growing, and finally he cut off the snake's immortal head and buried it on the road from Lerna to Elaeus, covering it with a boulder. He used the gall of the beast to poison the tips of his arrows.

As his third task Eurystheus ordered Heracles to bring back to Mycenae alive the Cerynean hind. It lived in the neighbourhood of Oenoë in Argolis, had golden horns and was sacred to Artemis. Heracles pursued it for a whole year and when at last, in its exhaustion, the beast tried to cross the Ladon he wounded it lightly with an arrow, caught it and carried it off on his shoulder. In Arcady he met Artemis and her brother, Apollo. The goddess wanted to take away the booty and reproached him for wanting to kill her sacred beast. Heracles confessed his predicament, admitting that he was acting on behalf of Eurystheus, and in this way he pacified her anger and brought the beast alive to Mycenae. During his pursuit of this beast the hero had travelled into the icy region of the Hyperboreans, the servants of Apollo. There he saw the olive, which was unknown in Greece. At his request they gave him a branch which he later planted in the precincts of the temple of Zeus at Olympia. After this the victory crown at the Olympic Games founded by Heracles was made of olive leaves.

The fourth task was to bring back alive the Erymanthian boar. The beast, breaking out of the Erymanthus mountains in Arcady, ravaged the countryside round Psophis. Heracles drove it with great shouts from its lair, pursued it through the snow and finally caught the exhausted beast in a noose.

His fifth task was to clean the dung from the stables of the wealthy King of Elis, Augeas, a son of Helios. He had to do this single-handed and complete the task in one day. Heracles went to Augeas without saying that he came on the orders of Eurystheus and promised that he would cleanse his stables in a single

day in return for a tenth of the herd. The king, who considered that this was impossible, agreed. Heracles diverted the nearby river through the stables and performed the task. But when Augeas heard that Heracles had been acting on the orders of Eurystheus he refused to pay and denied having made the bargain, although his son, Phyleus, testified against him. Augeas banished both his son and Heracles from the land. Phyleus settled in Dulichion while Heracles went to neighbouring Olenus. He arrived at the very moment when the centaur, Eurytion, tried to rape the daughter of his host, Dexamenes. Heracles slew the lascivious creature. Later, Heracles launched an expedition against Augeas to recover his unpaid reward. He deposed the king and founded the Olympic Games in honour of his father, Zeus, by the grave of Pelops in Olympia. This was the first Olympic Games and the winner of the race was his nephew, Oconus of Midea, the son of Lycimneus. The wrestling was won by Echemus of Tegea, the boxing by Doryclus of Tiryns, the four-in-hand chariot race by Samus of Mantinea, the javelin throwing by Phrastor and hurling the discus by Niceus. Heracles ordered that in future these contests should take place every four years.

The sixth labour was the expulsion of the Stymphalids. These were birds which flocked in their hosts in the wooded marsh of Stymphalus in Arcady. They had settled here from fear of wolves. Since Heracles did not know how to chase them away Athene gave him iron clappers forged by Hephaestus. With these he scared the birds away and they flew off with an appalling din. He brought down one or two with his arrows.

As the seventh task Eurystheus ordered Heracles to bring back the Cretan bull. This was supposed to be the same beast that, as Zeus, had once carried Europa across the sea. Others maintained that Minos, the King of Crete, had promised to sacrifice to Poseidon the first creature that came out of the sea. When this amazingly beautiful bull appeared Minos sent it to his flock and slaughtered another beast as a sacrifice to the sea god. Poseidon, in his rage, made the bull mad. Minos had no alternative but to agree that Heracles should capture the creature and take it to Olympus. It is also supposed to have been the same bull of which Pasiphaë, the wife of Minos, had become enamoured.

She had intercourse with it and was delivered of the Minotaur. He was allowed to roam free in Argolis and from there he raged through Laconia and Arcady, finally crossing the Isthmus of Corinth and reaching Marathon, where he caused great damage until he was caught by Theseus.

As his eighth labour Eurystheus ordered Heracles to bring back the horses of Diomedes, the king of a savage Thracian tribe. Diomedes was a son of Ares and his horses lived on human flesh. Heracles set out with a few companions, overpowered the watchman in the stables and led the horses to the sea. When the armed Thracians attacked he entrusted the beasts to his favourite, Abderus, and routed the enemy after killing Diomedes. On his return to the horses he found that they had trampled his friend to death. Heracles buried him and by his tomb founded the city of Abdera. He delivered the horses to Eurystheus, who set them free so that they should eventually be killed by wild beasts. It is also related that Heracles threw Diomedes to his horses as food.

The ninth task was to procure the girdle of the Amazon queen, Hippolyte. Heracles collected a host of heroes, including Theseus, and sailed with them across the Black Sea to the Maiotis plains where this warlike female tribe lived. He killed the queen and tore off her girdle. According to another version, however, she gave it to him of her own free will to ransom one of her comrades.

The tenth task was to bring back the cattle of Geryon. Geryon—a three-headed or three-bodied giant—was the son of Chrysaor and the Oceanid, Callirhoë. He lived on a mist-shrouded farm, to the far west, on the island of Erythia in Oceanus. The shepherd, Eurytion, and the double-headed hound, Orthus who, as offspring of Typhaon and Echidna, was a brother of Cerberus and the Lernaean Hydra, guarded his herds. After many wanderings Heracles came to the shores of Oceanus and sailed in the golden beaker of Helios across the waters to the island, where he killed both the hound and the shepherd and drove off the herds. When Geryon heard of this theft he hurried to the scene, only to be killed by an arrow from Heracles' bow. The hero then re-crossed the ocean in the beaker of Helios with his booty. The island of Erythia, it is said, lay opposite Gadeira (Gades). Heracles erected two pillars as a warning that the

navigable sea ended here. His return journey was filled with adventure before he finally delivered the herd to Eurystheus.

As his eleventh task Heracles had to bring back the apples from the Garden of the Hesperides. The Hesperides were the daughters of the night who lived beyond Oceanus, or daughters of Atlas who bore the dome of heaven on his shoulders at the rim of the world. When Zeus married Hera, he gave them some golden apples as a wedding present. The goddess was delighted with the gift and planted them in the garden of the gods where Atlas dwelt. When Heracles set out to fetch the apples he came, in his wanderings, to Prometheus, who was still chained to a rock, and he killed the eagle which tore at his liver. In gratitude the giant told him how he might procure the apples: he must visit Atlas and ask him to go and fetch the apples, and take the weight of the sky on his own shoulders while Atlas was away. This duly happened. But when Atlas returned he announced that he would take them to Eurystheus in person and that Heracles could continue to hold up the sky. The hero asked him to hold it once more for a brief moment until he had arranged a cushion for his head. Atlas agreed. But as soon as he was supporting the sky once more, Heracles took the apples and left with them to show Eurystheus. In another version of the story Heracles fetches the apples himself after having killed the dragon that guarded them.

And finally, as his last task, Heracles was to fetch Cerberus from the underworld. As we have already mentioned, this sinister hound was the offspring of Typhaon and Echidna. He had two, three or five heads and a dragon's tail. Cerberus stood at the entrance to Hades, ruthless and full of guile. He wagged his tail amiably at all those who entered, but would let no one leave again; anyone who attempted to escape was devoured. Heracles went down into the underworld, in the foothills of Mount Taenarus in Laconia, and asked Pluto's permission to take away the dog if he could overpower him without arms. With a breastplate and his lion skin Heracles approached the beast, caught him round the neck, strangled him into obedience and brought him to Eurystheus. Later he returned Cerberus to Hades.

ANOTHER LEGEND OF THE CHILDREN OF MEGARA

AFTER this last trial Heracles returned to Thebes. He had not seen his native town for many years; here he had left his wife, Megara, his children and his old father, Amphitryon. Creon, the father of Megara, ruled over Thebes. It was rumoured that on the orders of Eurystheus, Heracles had descended into Hades and after so prolonged an absence there was little hope of his return. In consequence Lycus, King of Euboea, a son of Lycus and Dirce, marched against Thebes, slew Creon, captured the city and decided to encompass the ruin of the surviving kin of Heracles. He caused them to be imprisoned and well guarded, for he was afraid that the sons of Megara would one day take their revenge. Just as the death sentence had been pronounced on the prisoners and they had abandoned all hope of being rescued, Heracles appeared. He had come direct from the underworld. He freed his kinsmen and slew Lycus. But Hera in her rage prepared new ordeals for him. She dispatched Lyssa (Madness) to him. At the moment he was sacrificing at the altar, madness overtook him and he killed Megara and his children with his arrows, raging until Athene felled him to the ground with a boulder. When he recovered from his frenzy, realized the enormity of his deeds and despaired of his life, the Athenian prince, Theseus, appeared in the guise of a rescuer. When Heracles had fetched Cerberus from the underworld he had freed the Athenian and his friend, Peirithous. They had tried to abduct the wife of Hades and had been held there as a punishment. On his return to Athens, Theseus heard of Lycus' aggression and hurried to the aid of his friend. Heracles accepted his offer to leave the devastated city and accompanied him to Athens.

SOME FURTHER DEEDS OF HERACLES

THE tasks imposed by Eurystheus were not the only great deeds performed by Heracles. Many stories are told of his further adventures, campaigns upon which he embarked with his companions in all parts of the world and great single combats. We shall relate a few of the more important here.

Heracles often encountered the centaurs. On one occasion

when hunting the Erymanthian boar he visited the cave of the peaceful centaur, Pholus, in the Pholoë mountains in Elis. His host offered him roast meat but ate his own meat raw. However, when Heracles asked for wine the centaur was reluctant to open the communal jar which was kept in the cave but eventually agreed on the plea of his thirsty friend. The other centaurs, attracted by the sweet odour of the wine, drew near and entered the cave armed with stones and fir-tree trunks. A battle ensued in which many were killed and the others routed. After the battle Pholus, in his curiosity, extracted an arrow from the body of one of the centaurs who had been killed by Heracles and examined the tiny object that had the power to kill such a huge creature. He wounded himself on the sharp barb which was poisoned and died. We have already related how Heracles killed the lascivious centaur, Eurytion.

In North Africa he conquered the giant, Antaeus, son of Ge, who challenged all strangers to a wrestling match, defeated them and built a temple to his father, Poseidon, from their skulls. As long as his feet remained on the ground he drew strength from the soil and was, therefore, invincible. When Heracles wrestled with the monster, he lifted him off the ground so that his mother could no longer give him strength and strangled him. It is told that Antaeus had a very beautiful daughter who was courted by many young men. Remembering how Danaus had selected husbands for his daughters, he also made his offspring stand at the goal and the first to touch her dress as he ran past the post was to be her husband. After the death of Antaeus, Heracles had a son by this girl, Iphinoë, whom, in memory of the strangled giant, he called Palaemon (the wrestler).

The ruler in Egypt at this time was the cruel king, Busiris, who sacrificed all travellers on the altar of Zeus. Heracles was seized and bound as he entered the land was to be led to the altar. But the hero tore himself free of his bonds, killed the king and many of his court.

Another impious creature whom Heracles slew was Cycnus, the belligerent son of Ares, a Thessalian bandit who waylaid visitors as they brought offerings to the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Heracles fought in full armour and killed him, although he himself was wounded by Ares in an attempt to avenge his

son. But it is told that Zeus sent a flash of lightning which blinded both Heracles and Ares, preventing them from coming to close quarters.

On one occasion Heracles was sold as a slave to the vintner, Syleus, who ordered his lusty servant to tend his vineyards. Heracles cut down all the vines with a billhook and piled them high on a hilltop. Then he slaughtered his master's best ox, fetched the best jar of wine from the cellar, ripped off the house door for a table and began to sing and carouse. Finally he diverted a nearby stream and flooded the entire property. In the ensuing combat Syleus was killed by his monstrous servant.

Heracles often showed himself to be a mighty eater and drinker. On one occasion he was the guest of Coronus, King of Lapithae. His host slaughtered two oxen, one of which was eaten whole by Heracles. He behaved outrageously in the house of his host, Admetus, when on his way to Thrace to fetch the horses of Diomedes. Admittedly he did not know that his friend's wife, Alcestis, had just died. Admetus had not mentioned the fact and in his hospitality begged his friend to stay. Heracles accepted the invitation, although he heard from the dirges that someone had died in the house. As soon as his host had left he called for food, drank his wine unwatered and began to sing lustily at the top of his voice. When, however, he learned the truth from one of the servants he sobered up immediately and decided to visit the grave of Alcestis and wrestle with the God of Death for her life:

'For I must save the woman newly dead
And set Alcestis in this house again,
And render to Admetus good for good.
I go. The sable-vestured King of Corpses,
Death, will I watch for, and shall find, I trow,
Drinking the death-draught hard beside the tomb.
And if I lie in wait and dart from ambush,
And seize, and with mine arm's coil compass him,
None is there shall deliver from mine hands
His straining sides, or e'er he yield his prey,
Yea, though I miss the quarry, and he come not
Unto the blood-clot, to the sunless homes

Down will I fare of Korè and her king,
And make demand. I doubt not I shall lead
Alcestis up, and give to mine host's hands,
Who to his halls received, nor drove me thence.'

Euripides: *Alcestis*

He carried out his intention and returned Alcestis to her husband.

Of the various monsters whom Heracles killed we must mention Lityerses. This creature was a peasant, reputed to be a bastard of King Midas of Phrygia, who, when he cut his corn, compelled any passers by to compete with him in reaping after plying them generously with wine. Then he cut off their heads and tied them up in the sheaves. Heracles killed him and threw his body into the Maeander.

Other opponents of Heracles were the Molionids, Cteatus and Eurytus, the sons of Actor, also known as the Actoriones. Their father is believed to have been Poseidon and their mother bore them in a silver egg. The twins, Cteatus and Eurytus, had grown together with a single body, four arms, four legs and two heads. They were famous for their white horses with which they defeated Nestor in the chariot races. Admittedly they would have been killed in their first serious battle when they served at an early age with the Epeians against the Pylions, had their father, Poseidon, not enveloped them in a mist and led them from the battlefield. Heracles, however, lured them into an ambush and killed them. Their sons, Amphinomachos and Thalpius, later took part in the Trojan War.

Heracles also fought against Neleus, the King of Pylos, defeating him and killing eleven of his twelve sons in single combat. Only Nestor survived. In this encounter he warred against the gods, throwing Ares three times to the ground and wounding his implacable enemy, Hera, in the breast.

On occasions Heracles waged war against the gods. Once he travelled to Delphi to cleanse himself from some bloody deed. When the Pythoness refused to utter her oracle he intended to plunder the temple, carry off the tripod and found his own oracular temple. But Apollo took a hand and a contest would have ensued had not Zeus cast a thunderbolt between them.

On another occasion Heracles turned against Sparta where Hippocöon had driven out his brothers, Tyndareus and Icarius, and seized power. Heracles defeated the usurper and his many sons with the aid of the Dioscuri, was himself wounded and led Tyndareus back to his own land. The next development in this campaign was the murder of Oeonus and of Licymnius' son, also a cousin of Heracles, by the sons of Hippocöon.

A harmless interlude was his encounter with the Cercopes. These brothers were comical dwarfs who delighted in deceiving their fellows. Their mother, however, had warned them to beware of a man with a black seat. One day they came across Heracles asleep in the forest. He had laid aside his weapons and the dwarfs tried to rob him of them. Heracles woke up, tied them to a stretcher head downwards and carried them off. They caught sight of his hairy hindquarters of which their mother had warned them and made so many jokes that Heracles had to laugh and let them go. Later they were turned into stones by Zeus because they had even tried to outwit him.

Heracles visited Troy long before the war, with his friend Telamon, to take his revenge on King Laomedon who had failed to pay him his promised reward. In Troy the hero also met the daughter of Aleus, Auge from Arcady, who was being brought up by Laomedon as his own daughter. She bore him Telephus, later King of Teuthrania, the land bordering on Troy. When Heracles set sail after the destruction of the city Hera tried once more to cause his downfall. She persuaded the God of Sleep to befuddle Zeus and raised a mighty storm which drove the ships of Heracles on to the Island of Cos. Zeus woke and punished his wife severely. When Heracles and his companions attempted to land on Cos Eurypylus, King of Meropes, tried to prevent them from doing so, taking them for pirates. Thereupon Heracles slew him and his sons.

His daughter, Chalciope, bore him Thessalus, whose sons, Pheidippus and Antiphus, later fought on the side of the Greeks from Cos against the Trojans.

Continuing on his journey Heracles landed on the Phlegra peninsula in Chalcidice. Here he encountered the terrifying giant, Alcioneus—a stout warrior herdsman with the stature of a mountain. The giant flung boulders at Heracles and his com-

panions and smashed twelve chariots with their occupants before being killed by one of the hero's arrows.

DEIANIRA, IOLE, THE DEATH OF HERACLES

WHEN Heracles, on the orders of Eurystheus, went down into Hades to fetch Cerberus he met the shade of Meleager and learned the tragic fate of this hero. He also heard of his beautiful sister, Deianira, who lived in the house of his father Oeneus in Calydon. Heracles decided to court her and make her his wife. Now the river god, Achelous, had been pestering the maiden for many years but she had rebuffed his advances because his hideous shape repelled her, for he appeared alternately as a bull, a snake or as a man with a bull's head. Heracles rescued her by defeating the river god in a wrestling match and in this way won Deianira for his bride. When Heracles returned with his young wife to his house in Argolis they had to cross the broad river, Euenus, shortly after leaving Calydon. Nessus, the centaur, offered his help and carried the girl on his back across the stream. But in midstream the centaur started to molest Deianira. She screamed in her distress and Heracles, seeing her peril, shot Nessus with an arrow which was poisoned with the blood of the Lernaean Hydra. The dying centaur told the woman he had tried to rape that he wanted to do one good deed before he died: she should catch some of the blood that flowed from his wound and use it later as a love potion should she ever have any doubts about her husband's fidelity. So Deianira, unknown to her husband, took some of the centaur's blood.

This was to have disastrous results at a later date. Later—many years later in fact—Heracles brought Deianira to Trachis at the foot of Mount Oita to pay a visit to his friend, King Ceyx. In the meantime she had given birth to a son, Hyllus, who was now a growing lad. Deianira rarely saw her husband because he was always campaigning in foreign parts. Returning to Trachis after a long absence Heracles decided, shortly before reaching home, to capture the nearby city of Oechalia. He had an old score to settle with the king, Eurystus. This monarch was a great adept with the bow and had decided that he would give his daughter only to the man who could defeat him in an archery



Poseidon: from Melos. National Museum, Athens.



Pallas Athene: Roman copy of the statue by Phidias.
National Museum, Naples.

contest. Heracles, many years before, had entered the lists as a suitor and shot his arrow furthest. But at the subsequent banquet a drunken brawl broke out and Heracles was reproached by his host for his servitude to Eurystheus and thrown out of the palace. He left Oechalia swearing vengeance. Some time later, when Eurytus' son, Iphitus, visited Heracles at Tiryns in search of some stolen horses the hero flung him down from the walls of the citadel so that he was crushed on the rocks below. As a punishment for this murder he had to serve Omphale, Queen of Lydia, for a year (or perhaps three). On the orders of Zeus, Hermes sold him as a slave to the Lydian queen, the purchase price being earmarked as damages for Eurytus, who refused to accept it. At the end of this humiliating term of slavery Heracles returned to Greece and made his way to Oechalia to take his revenge for this injustice. He captured and destroyed the city, killing King Eurytus. He spared, however, the king's daughter, Iole, and sent her, during his victory celebrations, to Deianira in Trachis. When the latter caught sight of this beautiful rival she was consumed with jealousy. She remembered the love potion which the centaur, Nessus, had given her, concocted from his blood. Smearing a cloak with it she sent it as a gift to her husband who was still in Oechalia. As soon as he donned it the poison began to take effect and to pierce his body with fiery stabs of pain. When Deianira learned of this tragedy which she had unwittingly caused she took her life. Heracles, however, feeling his end approaching, ordered his son, Hyllus, to carry him to the top of Mount Oita and burn him on a pyre.

On his deathbed Heracles ordered his son, Hyllus, to marry Iole and presented his bow and arrows to Philoctetes who at his request lit the funeral pyre. When the brushwood started to burn a cloud descended and amid thunderclaps and lightning flashes the hero was transported to heaven where, now that his life-work was ended, he dwelt without ageing and at peace among the immortals and reconciled with Hera who gave him Hebe, her daughter by Zeus, in marriage.

THE HERACLIDS

AFTER the death of Heracles his family was abandoned to the

rage of his former enemy, the implacable Eurystheus. Heracles had begotten many children by various women—Megara, Deianira, Chalciope, Omphale, Auge and others—and his aged mother, Alcmena, was still alive. Since they now had no powerful protector his issue fled with Alcmena to the court of their father's old friend, Ceyx, at Trachis. They were driven from there by the menaces of Eurystheus and eventually reached Athens, where Demophon, the son of Theseus, was king. The latter was related to them since Eurydice, Alcmena's mother, was a daughter of Pelops, and Demophon could also trace his ancestry back to Pelops through Aethra. The fugitives, therefore, settled in Attica, but even here they could not escape the hatred of their persecutor, who demanded that they should be delivered to him through his henchman, Copreus. When Demophon refused the Argives declared war on the Athenians. An oracle declared that the latter would be victorious if a virgin of noble birth was prepared to sacrifice herself. Macaria, the daughter of Heracles and Deianira, immediately offered herself as the victim. After her death the Argive army was defeated and Eurystheus was slain by Iolaus, the aged companion of Heracles, whose youthful vigour by a miracle was restored that day. After his death Iolaus was buried in the tomb of his ancestor, Amphitryon, in Thebes.

Now that Eurystheus was dead the path was free for the issue of Heracles and in the following years they spread out over a great part of the Grecian world. Many royal and noble families traced their family tree back to them—in the Peloponnesus, Thessaly, Macedonia, on the Islands, in Sicily, Italy and Asia Minor.

After his father's death Hyllus, the son of Heracles and Deianira, was adopted by Aegimius, the law-giver and King of the Dorians, as a foster-brother for his own two sons, Dymas and Pamphilus, in gratitude for the aid he had received from Heracles in many battles. After the death of Eurystheus Hyllus tried to return to the Peloponnesus with the surviving Heraclids. But at the Isthmus of Corinth they met the men from Tegea supported by Achaeans and Ionians, and a battle would have ensued had Hyllus not proposed a single combat between himself and the bravest warrior of the Peloponnesians to decide the

issue. The victor was Echemus, King of Tegea, who had accepted the challenge. Hyllus was killed and the Heraclids were forced to retire. It was this Echemus whose faithless wife was Timandra, the daughter of Leda. He won the wrestling in the first Olympic Games founded by Heracles.

Another of Heracles' sons was Tlepolemus. The hero had sired him with Astyoche, daughter of the King of Ephyra, after conquering the latter's city. As soon as Tlepolemus attained manhood he slew his great uncle, Licymnius, and had to leave the country. With a number of retainers he came to Rhodes, colonized the island and under the protection of Zeus soon acquired great wealth. Later he answered Agamemnon's summons and sailed with nine ships to Troy, where he fell at the hand of Sarpedon.

On the Island of Cos, too, ruled the issue of Heracles—Thessalus, son of the hero and Chalciope, and his descendants. The race to which the most famous physician of antiquity belonged, Hippocrates of Cos, traced its family tree back to Heracles.

After many fruitless attempts the Heraclids, Temenus, Cresphontes and Aristodemus, the grandsons of Hyllus, managed to return to the Peloponnesus. An oracle had announced that they should make a three-eyed man their leader. While they were at a loss to interpret this they met Oxylus, son of Andraemon or Haemon, an Aetolian, who had fled his own country after committing a bloody deed and went to Elis. He was now on his way back to Aetolia and rode a one-eyed horse. The Heraclids made him their leader. They conquered Argolis, Messenia and Laconia, distributed the lands between them by casting lots. Procles and Eurysthenes, the sons of Aristodemus, won Lacedaemon; Temenus Argolis; Cresphontes Messenia; Oxylus was promised Elis as his share. The sons of Aristodemus and the Cadmean Argeia, Procles and Eurysthenes, became the founders of the Royal Spartan house; from Archelaus, son of Temenus, stemmed the Macedonian Royal house, to which Alexander the Great belonged.

Alcmene, after the death of Eurystheus the arch-enemy, lived in Thebes. On her death the Heraclids laid her body in a

coffin and carried it outside the city for burial. Zeus had ordered Hermes to bear her to the Isles of the Blest. The messenger of the gods accomplished his task by leaving a stone in the coffin in place of the body. The pall-bearers were astounded at the weight, and, on opening the coffin, found the stone and erected it in a grove where the Heroön was built in her honour.

THE AGENORIDS IN CRETE

As we saw, Libye, the great-granddaughter of the river god, Inachus, became the ancestress of the Belids and the Agenorids. We have dealt with the Belids down to the issue of Heracles. Now let us take the Agenorids.

ZEUS AND EUROPA

THE sons of Agenor were Cadmus and Phoenix, and the daughter of Phoenix was Europa. Zeus saw this maiden one day playing with the nymphs on a flowery meadow, and conceived a burning passion for her. Changing himself into a bull he invited her to climb on his back and bore her from her native country, Phoenicia, across the sea to the Island of Crete. The fruit of their love was three sons—Minos, Sarpedon and Rhadamanthus. Zeus then gave her as wife to Asterion, the Cretan king.

PASIPHAË

MINOS, most royal of kings, who had received his sceptre from Zeus himself and who ruled over Crete and the Islands of the Aegean, ranked as a great and just law giver who was given counsel by his immortal father. His wife was Pasiphaë, the daughter of Helios. But Pasiphaë fell in love with a beautiful bull which Poseidon had sent out of the sea, and ordered the artist, Daedalus, to make for her a wooden cow, hollow inside, covered with hide and drawn by a cow-herd on wheels. The queen then had it brought to the meadow where the bull grazed and hid herself inside it. The bull mounted the cow and Pasiphaë gave

birth to the Minotaur who was born with the head of a bull and the body of a man. Minos imprisoned him in the Labyrinth, a maze designed by Daedalus with a host of blind alleys from which it was impossible for anyone who was ill-advised enough to enter it to find the exit. Pasiphaë bore to Minos among other children three sons—Androgeus, Deucalion and Glaucus—and a daughter named Ariadne. We have already told the story of Ariadne in a previous chapter.

GLAUCUS

WHEN Glaucus was still a child he fell into a jar of honey and was drowned. When he was nowhere to be found his parents consulted the oracle as to his whereabouts and were given the following advice: among your herds is a three-coloured steer. The man who best describes its colour will find the child and bring it back alive. The soothsayer, Polyidus, solved the problem by comparing the colours of the steer with the blackberry which also has three colours and in due course discovered the corpse of Glaucus. Minos now demanded that the seer should restore the child to life and locked him in a cell with the corpse. While Polyidus was sitting by the dead boy a snake crawled in which the wise man killed. He then saw a second snake approach carrying a herb in its jaws; when the herb touched the dead snake it was immediately restored to life. On seeing this Polyidus stroked the dead Glaucus with the herb and the boy opened his eyes.

Deucalion, the son of Minos, was the father of Idomeneus, who, with Meriones the son of Molus, set sail with eighty ships as leader of the Cretan contingent against Troy. From the battlement of the city Helen pointed him out to the Trojans elders. 'There stands Idomeneus like a god among the Cretans, and around him are gathered the Cretan princes. He was often the guest of Menelaus in our palace when he visited Sparta from Crete.'

MINOS AND SCYLLA

ANDROGEUS, also known as Eurygyes, the son of Minos, was killed in Athens as a youth. In order to avenge him Minos

besieged the city of Megara. There ruled King Nisus, who had a lock of golden or purple hair with which his life was bound up. Minos, therefore, bribed the king's daughter, Scylla, with gold jewellery and for love of the Cretan she cut off her father's immortal lock while he was asleep. Nisus was, therefore, doomed to die. Minos captured the city but punished the traitress by flinging her into the sea. Minos then turned against the Athenians and after a long siege decreed that each year seven youths and seven girls should be sent to Crete to serve as food for the Minotaur in the Labyrinth.

MINOS ON THE ISLAND OF COS

MINOS was the ruler of the sea and he sent his Cretans to colonize all the islands. In this way he once came to the Island of Cos. This island had previously been inhabited by the Telchines, skilled smiths but also evil sorcerers. By their enchantments they had once made the soil of the island barren. But they were punished for this sacrilege by Zeus, who sent a thunderbolt, flooded the island and destroyed all its inhabitants. Only old Macello and her daughter, Dexithea, survived. She met Minos when he landed on the island and her daughter bore him Euxantius, whom he appointed as lord over the island. He left half his crew behind to found a new colony.

DAEDALUS

AT the court of Minos in Crete lived the famous artist, Daedalus, who had sculpted a round dance for the king's daughter, Ariadne. He also built the Labyrinth. But when he helped Theseus to find the Minotaur he aroused the anger of Minos and he had to flee from Crete. He made himself a pair of wings and flew to Sicily. His son, Icarus, was to have accompanied him but despite his father's warnings the boy approached too near the sun and the wax with which the wings were secured melted and he crashed into the sea. Minos ruthlessly pursued Daedalus, showing great cunning by offering a prize for the man who could draw a thread through the spirals of a snail shell, for he believed that no one except Daedalus could possibly do this. In

Sicily King Cocalus promised to solve this problem. The artist had taken refuge with him and had advised him to fasten the thread to an ant which would draw it through the snail shell. Minos realized that Daedalus must be in hiding there and demanded that he should be extradited. Cocalus gave his word to do this and offered Minos safe conduct, but his daughters killed him in the bath. In the underworld Minos, with his golden sceptre, continued to rule as a Judge over the dead.

One of Minos' brothers was Rhadamanthus, who, on account of his justice, was withdrawn in the Elysian fields to Cronus where he became the husband of Alcmene, the mother of Heracles. The third brother of Minos, Sarpedon, was driven out of Crete by his elder brother and settled among the Solymeres, who were later called Lycians. In the Trojan War he came to the aid of the Trojans.

THE AGENORIDS IN THEBES

CADMUS

A SECOND son of Agenor was Cadmus. Cadmus, who was also said to be the son of Phoenix and the brother of Europa, came from Phoenicia to Boeotia in search of his sister, who had been raped by Zeus. The god in Delphi had told him to follow a steer and to found a city where the beast lay down to rest. He came to the region where later Thebes stood. Here the steer lay down and Cadmus wanted to sacrifice it to Athene. He sent his comrades away to fetch water. But a dragon of Ares guarded the spring and killed the water-bearers. Cadmus slew the dragon and on advice of Athene (or of Ares) sowed the dragon's teeth in the earth and from this seed sprang fully armed men, the Spartans. Upon this Cadmus flung stones at them and since they believed that they were being stoned by their own comrades they took up weapons against each other and were nearly all killed. The survivors were left by Cadmus in the city of Thebes which he founded on the site. As a punishment for killing the dragon, however, he had to serve Ares for a whole year. Zeus then gave him Harmonia, the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, as a wife. All the gods came to the wedding. The citadel of Thebes was called Cadmia after its founder. Cadmus himself was borne away on his death to the Islands of the Blest.

AMPHION AND ZETHUS

THE walls of the city of Thebes were built by the twin sons of Antiope, Amphion and Zethus. Antiope was the daughter of the river god, Asopus, or of King Nycteus. When she was pregnant

by Zeus she took to flight in the forest of Cithaeron for fear of her father's wrath. Here she gave birth to twins but she abandoned them, and, wandering further, came to King Epopeus of Sicyon, who made this beautiful woman his wife. When her father, Nycteus, was on the point of death he ascended the throne and at the same time his brother, Lycus, was ordered to punish Antiope for her lapse. Lycus set out on an expedition against Sicyon, killed Epopeus and brought Antiope back as a prisoner to Thebes. Here she had to endure the persecutions of Dirce, the wife of Lycus, and eventually she took to flight once more. Her twin sons, Amphion and Zethus, were found by a shepherd who educated them. By pure chance the suffering mother, now in rags, met her sons, recognized them and a terrible revenge fell upon the heartless Dirce. She was bound to a wild bull and trampled to death. Cadmus' city of Thebes was given cyclopean walls by the two brothers, Amphion making the huge stones fall into place to the sound of his lute. Amphion married Niobe, the daughter of Tantalus, who presented him with many children, who, together with their mother, suffered a terrible death at the hands of angry Artemis.

Amphion's brother, Zethus, married Aedon, the daughter of Pandareus, who presented him with two children—a son, Itylus, and a daughter, Neis. But Aedon was jealous of her sister-in-law's progeny and in her envy decided to kill one of her rival's sons. In the dead of night she wandered near the children's quarters and killed her own son by mistake. Zeus punished her, but at her request turned her into a nightingale who, for ever, with its song was to mourn the death of Itylus.

The following story is told of Pandareus, the father of Aedon. Zeus possessed a golden hound forged by Hephaestus which he had sent as a watchdog to his shrine in Crete. Pandareus stole the dog and brought it to Tantalus for safe keeping. When Hermes, whom Zeus had sent to look for the dog, came to Tantalus the latter lied and pretended to know nothing. Zeus then turned the thief into a stone and punished Tantalus.

THE ISSUE OF CADMUS

THE children of Cadmus were four daughters—Ino, Agave, Autonoe and Semele—and one son, Polydorus. Semele bore

Zeus Dionysus and when this god propagated his mysteries and returned home later to his own city, he found great opposition from King Pentheus, the grandson of Cadmus and son of Agave. Cadmus' frenzied daughters, Ino, Agave and Autonoë, tore Pentheus to pieces. Ino married Athamas, King of Orchomenos.

Autonoë became the wife of Aristaeus, who stemmed from the Thessalian descendants of the Lapithae. He was the son of Apollo. His grandfather, the King of the Lapithae, Hypseus, a son of the Thessalian river god, Peneus, and the Naiad, Creusa, had a daughter—the beautiful Cyrene—who grew up on the banks of the River Peneus. Finding no joy in household work or in the companionship of other girls she wandered off into the forest to hunt wild beasts with her spear and sword and to protect her father's herds. One day Apollo saw the maiden wrestling single-handed with a lion on Mount Pelion, the abode of the wise centaur, Chiron. The surprised and love-sick god asked the centaur about the girl's origin and carried her off in his golden chariot across the sea to Libya, where Aphrodite blessed their marriage. In Libya, the city of Cyrene was named after Apollo's mistress and she bore him a son—Aristeus. Hermes brought him to the Hours and to Ge, from whom his ancestress, Creusa, stemmed and he was fed on nectar and ambrosia to become an immortal. Others maintain that the Centaur, Chiron, brought him up in his cave on Mount Pelion.

The wife of Aristaeus was Autonoë, the daughter of Cadmus, and she bore him a son, Actaeon. The latter was an ardent hunter, but since he boasted that he knew more about hunting than the goddess herself she turned him into a stag and he was devoured by his own hounds.

OEDIPUS

THE only son of Cadmus was Polydorus, King of Thebes. His son was Labdacus and his grandson, Laius. Laius married Jocasta, the daughter of Menoeceus. Since this marriage for a long time remained childless Laius consulted the oracle of Apollo and received the answer that he would never have any children, for if he produced a son that son would kill his father. We also know why this sinister fate hung over Laius. In his

youth he visited Elis and had seen there the son of Pelops, Chrysippus. Falling in love with him he had carried him off to Thebes. Pelops laid a curse upon him: he should never have a son, and if by chance he begat one he would die by his hand. The Delphian oracle which Laius consulted gave the same reply: 'You will have a son but fate has decreed that you will lose your life at the hands of your son. For Zeus promised this to Pelops when you seduced his son.' In spite of this warning from the gods, Laius continued to consort with his wife who in due course gave birth to a son. For fear that the oracle would be fulfilled he decided to do away with the baby. It was given to a shepherd to expose on the slopes of Cithaeron. The shepherd, however, did not kill the boy as ordered but entrusted it to another shepherd who tended the herds of Polybus, King of Corinth, and he delivered it to his master. The child was brought up like a son by the King of Corinth and he was called Oedipus, in other words, the swollen-footed, for as a baby his ankles were bored so that he could be carried like a dead hare and as a result his feet were swollen for life.

Oedipus soon showed great prowess among the boys of his own age. One day, however, when one of them in his drunkenness treated him as a bastard he asked his Corinthian foster-parents about his origin, but could learn no details. He travelled, therefore, to Delphi to consult the oracle. Here, too, he learned nothing of his parents but only the appalling pronouncement that he would marry his mother and kill his father. Upon this he shook the dust of Corinth from his feet in order to defeat the oracle, since he considered the royal couple as his parents.

At the same time Laius returned to Delphi to learn a little more about his son who had been missing for so long. He was still terrified by the previous oracle. On the way he met a lonely wanderer at the narrow cross-roads. The herald who was walking ahead of Laius told the stranger to stand aside. It came to a conflict in which Laius was killed. In this way one part of the prophecy was fulfilled because the lonely traveller was none other than Oedipus, although no one had recognized him.

In the meantime a great misfortune had overtaken the Thebans. A monster had been sent by some angry god into their land. The man-devouring Sphinx—a hideous creature

with a woman's head and breast and claws and tail of a lion. She was a daughter of Orthus and the Chimaera and a sister of the Nemean lion. She had devoured many victims and could only be defeated by the person who solved the riddle she asked of all travellers. The riddle was as follows: 'It is four-footed and two-footed and three-footed and has but one name. Alone of all creatures on the earth, the air and the sea, it changes its appearance, but when it uses most of its feet it advances the slowest.' Anyone who could not solve the riddle was devoured by the Sphinx. Then Creon, the brother of Jocasta, who ruled in Thebes, after the death of Laius, announced that anyone who answered the riddle, and by so doing conquered the Sphinx, would be given the kingdom and the Queen Jocasta for his wife. Oedipus left the crossroads where the murder had been committed and journeyed until he met the Sphinx. He solved her riddle. It was man, who, as a child, walks on all fours, then goes on two feet and in old age uses a stick as his third foot to aid his shaky legs. The Sphinx cast itself into the abyss. Oedipus was crowned King of Thebes and became the husband of Jocasta without knowing she was his mother. She bore him four children, Polynices, Eteocles, Antigone and Ismene.

After many years Oedipus drove one day with Jocasta past the scene of the murder, told her of the event and showed her the sword and belt which he had taken from the unknown dead man. Jocasta now knew that Oedipus was the murderer of her husband but she remained silent. A little later the shepherd came to Thebes and reported that he had not killed the boy who had been entrusted to him by the King and Queen of Corinth, producing the swaddling clothes and the thorns with which the feet of Oedipus had been pierced. Since it was now clear that the son had also married his mother, Jocasta committed suicide and Oedipus gouged out his own eyes.

THE FATE OF OEDIPUS

BLIND Oedipus left his fatherland accompanied by his daughter, Antigone, and at enmity with his sons. On his long flight he came to Attica, to the shrine of the venerable goddesses—the Eumenides (the well-disposed), the daughters of the earth and

darkness—at Colonus, a hill north of Athens. Here the god in Delphi had once revealed he would meet his fate—to the profit of the Athenians who gave him asylum but to the undoing of those who had driven him out. But the inhabitants of Colonus, on learning the terrible name of the foreign fugitive and having heard reports of his fate, told him to wait until their king, Theseus, had made his decision as to whether he could enter the country. Then Ismene, the youngest daughter of Oedipus, brought news from Thebes. Eteocles had seized the power and driven his elder brother, Polynices, from the land; the latter was raising an army in Argos to march against Thebes. The Thebans had also consulted the oracle: to save their city they were to bring back the exile who had suffered so greatly, living or dead, for he possessed great supernatural powers. But Oedipus cursed his sons who had allowed him to leave the city in poverty, and when Creon arrived at Colonus in person to bring the exile home he refused curtly. When Creon's men tried to carry off father and daughter by force, Theseus came to his aid and promised him protection in Attica. Polynices, who tried to persuade his father to join himself and his army so that he could be assured of conquering his brother, was also dismissed with a curse. Then thunder and lightning flashes denoted the end of Oedipus. He retired with his daughters and Theseus to the sacred grove of the Eumenides and was spirited from this world.

After their father's death his daughters returned to Thebes to try and prevent further fratricide, for Polynices was marching with his army against his own city.

THE ASSEMBLY OF THE SEVEN HEROES

As a result of quarrels for the succession Polynices had left Thebes and sought outside help to seize the throne for himself. The father's curse weighed heavily on the two brothers. Polynices came to Argos where Adrastus, the son of Talaus, the honey-tongued orator, was king. On his arrival by night he became involved in a fight with a man—it was Tydeus, the son of Oeneus of Calydon, who had been forced to flee on account of a blood guilt—and when the king hurried up to stop the quarrel he recognized the significance of the oracle which had

been given concerning him: 'You will give your daughters in marriage to a lion and a boar.' So Adrastus accepted the two stout warriors as sons-in-law and promised Polynices to join the expedition against Thebes. In this way seven heroes assembled under the leadership of Adrastus, including the seer, Amphiaras, a relative of Adrastus, since both of them counted Amythaon, son of Tyro, among their forbears.

Previously they had been enemies but now they were reconciled and Adrastus had given his sister, Eriphyle, to Amphiaras in marriage. At the wedding the two brothers-in-law had sworn that should any disagreement break out between them they would submit to the decision of Eriphyle. But since Amphiaras could see into the future he knew that in this campaign all the participants would be killed with the exception of Adrastus, and so he refused to leave with them. Eriphyle was then bribed with the necklace of the Theban ancestress, Harmonia, which Polynices had appropriated, and advised her husband to take part in the expedition against Thebes. This being her decision Amphiaras had to accept. Before he left, however, he ordered his son, Alcmaeon, to kill his mother when he grew up and undertake a punitive expedition against Thebes.

HYPSIPYLE

So the seven heroes marched against Thebes—Tydeus, Amphiaras, Capaneus, Parthenopaeus, Hippomedon and Eteocles, the son of the Argive, Iphis, under the leadership of Adrastus. On their journey they came at first to Nemea. Here Amphiaras left his companions to look for water. On the way he met the nurse of the king's little son, Opheltes, who led him to a spring. This nurse, however, was none other than the daughter of the former King of Lemnos, Thoas. When the Lemnian women killed all their fathers and husbands Hypsipyle had spared her father and become queen of this matriarchy. When the Argonauts, on their way to Colchis, landed on the island they were received by the women and had intercourse with them. Hypsipyle herself bore Jason, the Argonaut leader, two sons—Euneus and Thoas. Later, when the Lemnian women learned that she had spared her father, she was sold into slavery and came to Nemea as maid-

servant to King Lycurgus and became nurse to the king's son, Opheltes. While Hypsipyle led Amphiaraus to the spring she left the little boy unguarded and he was killed by a dragon. Amphiaraus managed to persuade the king, who wanted to hang the nurse, of her innocence and to pacify him. The dead boy was given a noble funeral and the Nemean games, which were to be celebrated every two years, were founded in his honour. He himself was worshipped under the name Archemorus, because he was the 'forerunner of death' in the case of the seven heroes.

In the meantime the sons of Hypsipyle, Euneus and Thoas, searching for their mother were guided to Lemnos by their ancestor, Dionysus, for Hypsipyle's father, Thoas, was the son of Dionysus and Ariadne. Hypsipyle was allowed to return home but Dionysus sent Euneus to Athens where he became the founder of a famous race which devoted itself to the musical art and in future provided priests for Dionysus Melpomenus.

THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES

WHEN the Seven drew near to Thebes, Asopus pitched his camp. At first they sent Tydeus, son of Oeneus, alone as a messenger to Thebes where he found Eteocles and his companions at a feast. He sat down without fear among them, but although his patron goddess, Athene, had warned him to behave calmly he challenged them to a contest and defeated them with the aid of the goddess. On his return to his own camp, however, the Thebans had laid an ambush of fifty men. He killed all of them, however, except one. By a spring Tydeus surprised Ismene the sister of the enemy brothers, in dalliance with Periclymenus, the grandson of Tiresias. On Athene's orders he killed her, but her companion escaped.

As the Argonauts drew near to Thebes they separated into seven bands, each before one of the city's seven gates. In Thebes at that time lived the old blind soothsayer, Tiresias. The following story is told of his youth. On one occasion he had watched two snakes procreating and killed one of them. As a punishment he was turned into a woman, but later resumed his male sex. One day when Zeus and Hera were arguing as to whether the



Hermes, by Praxiteles.



Apollo Sauroctonos. Vatican Museum.

man or the woman had the most pleasure from love, they asked Tiresias, who had experience of both, and he replied that nine-tenths of the pleasure was enjoyed by woman and one-tenth by the man. Hera blinded him in her anger, but Zeus gave him the gift of prophecy and old age. Other legends trace his blindness back to the rage of Athena, whom he had once seen naked in her bath. But on the plea of his wife the goddess had cleaned the ears of the blind man so that he could understand the speech of the birds and gave him a staff with the aid of which he could walk as though he were not blind. He survived through seven generations, from Cadmus to the Epigoni. Tiresias now announced to the Thebans that they would conquer if Menoeceus, one of Creon's sons, would offer himself as a sacrifice. The boy accepted death to save his city.

And now the battle began. The Thebans were thrown back into the city and Capaneus, the son of Hipponous of Proetus' race, had already placed the scaling ladders against the walls, boasting that he would take the city even against the orders of Zeus. But the god slew him with a thunderbolt and the Argives were routed. When the battle was resumed Eteocles and Poly-nices decided upon single combat, during which Eteocles wounded his brother fatally, but was himself killed when trying to help him out of his armour. So died both the sons of Oedipus and the battle flared up once more. Tydeus was slain by Melanippus and in turn killed by Amphiaraus. At the request of the dying Tydeus, Amphiaraus handed him the head of his opponent and he drank his brains. Athene had hurried to the scene to bestow immortality upon her favourite, but on seeing this gruesome deed she turned away in horror. The dying Tydeus begged that she would later make his son immortal. This son was Diomedes, the great hero of the Trojan War. Fate also overtook Amphiaraus. As he was fleeing in his chariot before Periclymenus, Zeus caused the earth to open ahead of him before he could be stabbed in the back by the Theban's spear and bore him away with his chariot.

In this way all the seven fell except Adrastus, the leader, who survived thanks to the speed of his immortal horse, Arion, which bore him away, swift as an arrow. Before the seven pyres on which the dead were burnt he spoke the words: 'I mourn for

Amphiaraus, the eye of our army, a soothsayer and a stout-hearted warrior.'

THE FALLEN, ANTIGONE

AFTER the campaign of the Seven against Thebes had collapsed, and both Eteocles and Polynices were killed, old Creon took over the reins of state once more. He decreed that the corpse of the renegade, Polynices, should not be buried under the penalty of death. His sister, Antigone, refused to obey and observed the eternal, unwritten law that the dead had a right to burial. But when she tried in secret to give her brother the honours of death she was seized and immured in a tomb. Her lover, Haemon, the son of Creon, tried to free her, but on entering the tomb he found that she had taken her life. He plunged his sword through his chest and fell upon her corpse.

It is also said that the Thebans gave the Argive corpses to the dogs to eat and that the Athenians forced them to deliver up the dead. Adrastus and the mothers of the fallen heroes had begged King Theseus to see that the dead were honoured. Theseus set out against the Thebans and conquered them, forcing them to give up the corpses, the remains of which were buried with great pomp at Eleusis. Evadne, the widow of Capaneus, committed suicide by leaping on to her husband's funeral pyre.

THE CAMPAIGN OF THE EPIGONI

WHEN the sons of the Seven, the Epigoni, had grown up they banded together in an expedition of revenge against Thebes. Aegialeus, the son of Adrastus, or Alcmaeon, the son of Amphiaraus, was the leader and while Adrastus was the only one of the heroes to survive the first campaign in the campaign of the Epigoni his son was the only one to fall in battle. This had been pronounced by the oracle of the soothsayer, Amphiaraus, who was now deep beneath the ground. After the battle in which Aegialeus was killed, the Thebans left their city under the leadership of Laodamas, son of Eteocles, and started to wander. Blind Tiresias and his daughter, Manto, fell into the hands of the victors. They gave the girl as the most beautiful object of their booty to the god in Delphi who sent her to Asia Minor, where

she founded an oracle shrine in Claros. Her father, Tiresias, died by the source, Tilphussa, after drinking its ice-cold water. Odysseus visited him later in the underworld to ask his advice.

ALCMAEON

WHEN Amphiaras left with the Seven against Thebes he had ordered his son, Alcmaeon, as soon as he grew up to kill his mother, Eriphyle, in order to avenge his father. Alcmaeon carried out this order and was banished for a long time. An oracle had announced that he would find peace in a land which at the time of the murder the sun had not yet lit and had in fact not even risen above the horizon, for he had stained the whole earth by his crime. At last he found asylum in the marshy land of Achelous in the Echidnian Islands on the coast of Acarnania. This land was not in existence when he committed his crime. Later, the fatal jewellery which the gods had once presented to Harmonia on her marriage to Cadmus, and which had bribed Eriphyle and brought misfortune to its owner in later generations, was sent as an offering to Delphi.

THE ISSUE OF THE CADMIDS

WITH the departure of Laodamas from Thebes the Cadmus line was not broken. In Thebes ruled Thersander, son of Polynices. He also took part in the Trojan War and fell at the hand of Telephus in Teuthrania. The aristocratic family of the Emmenids in Acragas in Sicily and the Aegids in Sparta, Thera and Cyrene, could trace their family tree back to him. But the royal races in Sparta which ruled side by side boasted their descent from Heracles as well as of their Cadmian blood, since one of their ancestors, Aristodemus, had married Argia, the daughter of the Cadmian Autiesion. Of the Epigoni who took part in the Trojan War Diomedes, son of Tydeus, Sthenelus, son of Capaneus, and Euryalus, son of Mecisteus, distinguished themselves. These three heroes led the Argive troops and sent eighty ships to Troy.

THE DESCENDANTS OF ASOPUS

Two river gods, sons of Oceanus and Tethys, were the forbears of two famous heroes, Inachus, of whom we have already spoken, and Asopus. There were several rivers of this name, the most important being one in southern Boeotia and another at Philius and Sicyon in the northern Peloponnesus. Asopus—who, according to legend, was also the son of Poseidon or Zeus—had many daughters, one of whom we have already met: Antiope, the mother of Amphion and Zethus, who is also represented as a daughter of Nycteus.

AEACUS

ANOTHER daughter of Asopus was Aegina, who was seduced by Zeus. Her father on his search for her came to Corinth, where the sly Sisyphus betrayed Zeus as the seducer of the girl. But Zeus chased the river god back into his stream with a thunderbolt and this is the reason why coal was often found later in the bed of the Asopus River. The Lord of Olympus brought the girl to the island which was named Aegina after her and she became the mother of Aeacus, to whom Zeus showed particular favour. Zeus bestowed great gifts on the Aeacids—intelligence upon the issue of Amythaon and wealth upon the Atridae. Since Aeacus was alone on the remote island, Zeus, at his request, turned the ants there into men who were later called Myrmidons; these were the first builders of sailing ships. On one occasion when drought and famine descended upon Greece and an oracle declared that the land would not be freed of its misfortunes until Aeacus made a prayer, he called upon Zeus, who allowed the rain to fall. It is also related that Aeacus summoned

Poseidon and Apollo to help him build the walls of Troy. Three serpents crawled up to the citadel; two of them fell dead to the ground while the third, screaming wildly, managed to scale the heights. Apollo interpreted this omen: in the spot where Aeacus had built the walls they were weak and vulnerable. Troy would be captured twice, each time with the aid of one of the Aeacids. This happened in due course: the first time by Telamon, the companion of Heracles, and the second time by Neoptolemus.

Telamon was believed to be a son of Aeacus and Endeis, the daughter of Sciron. The second son of this marriage was Peleus, the father of Achilles and grandfather of Neoptolemus. A third son, Phocus, was born to Aeacus by Psamathe, the daughter of Nereus. Phocus was killed in a discus-throwing contest by his brothers, who, in consequence, were banished by their father from Aegina. On his death Aeacus became one of the judges in the underworld.

TELAMON

TELAMON was a friend of Heracles and accompanied him on his expedition against Troy and against the Amazons. He also took part in the Voyage of the Argonauts. When Heracles set out to conquer the Amazons he came to Aegina to recruit Telamon for his plans and was received with great hospitality. His guest was called upon to pour a libation to the gods from a golden beaker, and Heracles raised his hands to the sky and prayed: 'Father Zeus, hear my plea and give this man a brave son from the womb of Eriboia, invulnerable as the lion's skin I wear, and with courage for his portion.' As a sign that his prayer had been heard Zeus sent an eagle. Heracles, with his gift of prophecy, said: 'You will be given the son you wish, Telamon. Call him Aeas after this eagle.' The mother of Aeas was Eriboia, a daughter of Alcathous from Megara, a granddaughter of Pelops. From his marriage with Hesione, the daughter of Laomedon, whom Telamon had received from Heracles as booty for the aid he had given at Troy, he begat a son—Teucer.

AEAS, TEUCER

AEAS, the son of Telamon, was one of the bravest heroes before Troy. He sailed with twelve ships from Salamis with Agamem-

non, a 'shield and tower of the Achaeans' who wore a breastplate like a tower and made from seven ships of cowhide embossed with iron, Tychius of Hyle in Boeotia had forged this armour for him. He repeatedly distinguished himself in battle, and in single combat with Hector, in the battle for the ships and for the body of Patroclus. In the Trojan camp he sired with one of the prisoners of war, Tecmessa, a son whom he called after his broad shield, Eurysaces. When Achilles fell and his mother, Thetis, presented his weapons at the funeral feast as a prize for the bravest of the Achaeans, only Aeas and Odysseus were competitors with any chance. But when the weapons were awarded to Odysseus, Aeas could not bear the shame of his defeat and killed himself. Even in Hades he reproached Odysseus when the latter went down into the underworld to question Tiresias. Odysseus related this encounter to the Phaeacians. 'I approached him with friendly words: "Aeas, son of Telamon, will you not—even after death—forget the rancour you nursed because of the fatal weapons of Achilles with which the gods decided to ruin the Achaeans? For in you they lost a great pillar of strength and we constantly mourn your death as we mourn that of Achilles. No one is to blame except Zeus, who hated the Achaean army and determined your fate. Hear my words and dispel your anger." Thus, I spoke. But he did not reply and returned into the darkness with the other shades.'

The half-brother of Aeas, Teucer, a staunch supporter of the elder Telamon, won great fame as an archer before Troy. On his return to his father after the war he was rejected because he had not avenged his brother for the injustice done by the Greeks, and he went to the Island of Cyprus where he founded the city of Salamis.

PELEUS

TELAMON's brother was Peleus, who had been banished from his country for killing his half-brother, Phocus. He travelled to Phthia in Thessaly and sought to expiate his guilt with Eurytion. There he married the latter's daughter and received from him a portion of land as his domain. But he had to flee once more since he accidentally killed his father-in-law. He sought asylum with Aeastus, the son of Pelias, in Iolchos. He was absolved from his

latest blood guilt, but Hippolyte, the wife of his host, conceived a mad passion for him. When he spurned her advances she accused him to her husband of trying to seduce her, and at the same time wrote a letter to his wife in Phthia saying that he was intending to marry one of the daughters of Acastus. His wife committed suicide. Acastus, who believed his wife's story but did not wish to kill his guest, took him out hunting and after secretly taking away his weapons left him asleep on the barren slopes of Pelion. Here he hoped that he would find his death either at the hand of the centaurs or be devoured by wild beasts. But the wise Chiron rescued him and gave him shelter in his cave.

Later, Peleus was given the Nereid, Thetis, for a wife and the wedding took place in the presence of the gods in Chiron's cave on Mount Pelion. After destroying the city of Iolchos, to take his revenge on Acastus, he made with his wife a triumphant entry into Phthia bringing great booty, to the delight of his subjects.

ACHILLES

ACHILLES was the son of Peleus and Thetis. He had been educated by Chiron in his cave on Mount Pelion and showed his prowess at an early age. At the age of six he killed savage lions and boars and by his swiftness captured a stag without dogs or a net, so that even Artemis and Athena were amazed. Later, Phoenix took over the young hero's education in Phthia. Phoenix, the son of Amyntor, had been obliged to leave his land, banished by his father. The old man had fallen in love with a young girl while his wife was still alive.

The betrayed wife implored her son, Phoenix, to alienate the girl's affections. The boy did as he was bid, but when Amyntor learned of this plot he cursed his son and called upon the Furies to avenge him so that Phoenix would never be able to produce another son. Hades and Persephone fulfilled the curse. At first Phoenix intended to kill his father, but finally changed his mind and decided to leave the country. To prevent this his kinsman kept guard over him for nine days and nine nights. He managed to escape, however, and hastened to Phthia, where he was welcomed by Peleus. Since the gods had forbidden him to have a

son he was entrusted with the education of the young Achilles and later accompanied his pupil to Troy.

When Agamemnon assembled the Greek army for the Trojan expedition Thetis brought her son to the Island of Skyros to King Lycomedes where, dressed as girl, he lived among the king's daughters. But since, according to the oracle of Calchas, the city could not be captured without Achilles his deception was unmasked on the advice of the soothsayer. Agamemnon, who had come to Skyros in search of heroes, caused the war trumpets to be sounded outside the palace. Achilles immediately hurried to the spot and was recognized. During his stay in Skyros Deidamia, the daughter of Lycomedes, presented him with a son, Neoptolemus.

PATROCLUS

PATROCLUS, the friend of Achilles, was also brought up in Phthia. He was the son of Menoetius, a kinsman of Achilles. For Menoetius was a son of Actor and Aegina and thus half-brother to Acacus, Achilles' grandfather. Patroclus had been forced to flee from his homeland, Opus, in Locris, after killing one of his comrades at play and he had gone with his father to Peleus who received both of them. The two friends went together to Troy.



The sons of Uranus and Ge, who were the most important forbears of the future races, were the two Titans, Oceanus and Iapetus. We have already met the hero races who traced their descent back through the river gods, Inachus and Asopus, to Oceanus. We shall now deal with the Iapetids, Prometheus and Atlas.

THE RACE OF THE IAPETID, PROMETHEUS AND THE TANTALIDS

DEUCALION AND HIS DESCENDANTS

THE son of Prometheus was Deucalion, who married Pyrrha, the daughter of Epimetheus and Pandora. When Zeus decided to wipe out the human race he advised his son, Prometheus, to make a wooden chest, fill it with food and get into it with Pyrrha. His son obeyed and when Zeus released the floods of rain from the sky which were to overwhelm the earth, the box floated on the waters and finally came to rest on Parnassus. When the rain ceased and the waters receded, Deucalion climbed out and sacrificed to Zeus. And since the god offered to grant him a wish he begged that he might be allowed to people the world once more with men. He and his wife were told to throw stones over their shoulders. The stones thrown by Deucalion became men and those thrown by Pyrrha women.

Their son was Hellen, after whom the race of the Hellenes was called. Hellen's son, Aeolus, begat many others, five sons Cretheus, Salmoneus, Sisphyus, Athamas and Perieres, and several daughters, including Alcyone and Calyce.

Alcyone married Ceyx, King of Trachis, one of Heracles' hosts. They were destroyed by their arrogance for they called each other Zeus and Hera respectively. As a punishment Zeus changed them into birds—Ceyx into a kingfisher and Alcyone into a gull. A daughter of Ceyx, Themistonoë, married Cycnus, the powerful foe of Heracles.

Another daughter of Aeolus, Calyce, presented the son of Zeus—Aethlius—with a boy named Endymion. His immortal

grandfather granted him the gift that he could decide when his life was to end. After his death he was taken up to Olympus by Zeus. There he is believed to have fallen in love with Hera and as a result was banished to Hades. There is another legend, however, that he was given eternal sleep and that Selene, the Moon Goddess, fell in love with him when she saw him slumbering in a cave.

Endymion's son was Aetolus, after whom the land of Aetolia was named. The grandson of Aetolus was Agenor, who had a very beautiful daughter, Demodoce or Demonice. She was courted with rich gifts by many princes but finally became the mistress of Ares, to whom she bore—among others—Euenus, the father of Marpessa, and Thesteus, the father of Althaea and Leda. The former married her cousin, Oeneus, and the latter married Tyndareus.

Apart from the Deucalion, son of Prometheus, there was also a Deucalion, son of Minos, whose son, Idomeneus, took part in the Trojan War, and finally a third Deucalion, who lived after this war. The latter had a son, Orestheus, of whom the following legend is told.

He wandered to Aetolia and became king there. A bitch bore him a wooden stick which he buried in the earth. From it grew vines with many grapes and as a result of this he christened his son Phytius (the planter). He in turn called his son Oineus after the vine and the son of Oineus was Aetolus, who gave his name to the country.

MELEAGER AND THE CALYDONIAN BOAR HUNT

THE sons of Oeneus, Tydeus and Meleager, who lived in Aetolia, could also trace their family tree back to Endymion. On the birth of Meleager, the Goddesses of Fate, the Hours visited the mother, Althaea, placed a billet of wood in the fire of the stove and decreed: 'The child will die as soon as it sees the light of the world, just as this faggot of wood is burnt.' Althaea plucked the wood from the flame, extinguished the burning embers and kept the charred remains in a chest. Later when his father, Oeneus, sacrificed to the gods he overlooked Artemis, thereby incurring the anger of the goddess. 'It is difficult for mortals to interpret

the mind of a god, otherwise Oeneus would have brought goats and cattle to placate Artemis,' Meleager said, relating his story to Heracles when he had gone down to the underworld to fetch Cerberus. The angry goddess sent a wild boar into Calydon's beautiful meadows. With his tusks he destroyed the vineyards, killing men and beasts whenever they approached. The bravest heroes then assembled to kill the beast. After a six days' hunt fortune favoured them and they buried the dead boar, which had been clubbed to death. But the anger of the goddess was not appeased and a battle broke out between the Aetolians and the Curetes for the possession of the skin. Among the latter were Althaea's brothers, two of whom Meleager killed. For in battle the war god's spleen distinguishes neither friend nor foe. The shot will kill blindly if the god so decrees. Then Althaea decided upon the death of her son, fetched the wood from the chest and flung it in the fire. 'Sweet life departed from me,' concluded Meleager, 'and I felt that I was sinking into unconsciousness. With my last breath I wept as I took leave of my wonderful youth.' When Heracles heard these words his eyes were moist with tears and he replied to the hero: 'The best for man is never to have been born or to have seen the sunlight.'

Among those who took part in the Calydonian hunt were the so-called Dioscuri, who, as sons of Leda, were cousins of Meleager, Pelcus, Acastus, Admetus, Jason, Melanion and the Arcadian huntress, Atalanta, who was the first to wound the boar.

Atalanta, the daughter of Iasius, as a huntress was a companion of Artemis and like this goddess despised Aphrodite. Finally, however, she gave herself to a man, Milanion, and their child was Parthenopacus—one of the seven heroes who took part in the expedition against Thebes. There is also a story of an Atalanta in Boeotia who wanted to remain a virgin. Her father agreed on condition that her suitors should run a race with her. Those who were defeated were to be killed. Hippomenes won the race by the use of craft. Aphrodite presented him with three golden apples which he dropped at various stages of the race. Atalanta stopped to pick them up, thus giving her adversary a lead and enabling him to win the race. But in the heat of their passion they celebrated their marriage in a nearby shrine and were transformed by the offended goddess into a pair of lions.

TYDEUS AND DIOMEDES

MELEAGER's brother was Tydeus, son of Oeneus and Periboia. He, too, was one of the seven who marched against Thebes and was killed in the battle. The son of Tydeus was Diomedes, who, with the Epigoni, later conquered the city. With a fleet of eighty ships he sailed with Sthenelus, Euryalus and men from Argolis to Troy, where he was one of the bravest and, like his father, stood under the protection of Athene. He even dared to fight against the gods who were on the side of the Trojans, wounding Aphrodite and Ares and even attacking Apollo.

IDAS AND LYNCEUS

IDAS and Lynceus also took part in the Calydonian boar hunt. As sons of Aphareus and grandsons of Perieres they were descendants of Aeolus. Idas, who also claimed Poseidon as his father, carried off Euenus' daughter, Marpessa, on his wind-swift horses—a gift from his divine father. Euenos followed the robber, failed to catch up with him and fell into the Aetolian River which later bore his name. But Apollo also courted the maiden and a conflict ensued between Idas and the god, which Zeus finally had to settle. The girl was to decide to whom she should belong. She chose the mortal for fear that Apollo might leave her as soon as she grew old. Her daughter was Cleopatra, who later became the wife of Meleager.

THE APHARETIDS AND THE DIOSCURI

THE brothers Idas and Lynceus, the sons of Aphareus, once quarrelled with the Dioscuri, Castor and Polydeuces. There are several versions of the outcome. One legend maintains that the two couples on a raid captured a large herd of cattle in Arcady. Since Idas was to distribute the booty he cut one of the oxen in four and decided that the man who ate his quarter first should take half of the booty and that the second should take the rest. Thereupon he ate his portion and part of his brother's and as a result they brought their booty back to Messenia. But the Dioscuri pursued them, recovered the prize and then laid an

ambush beneath an oak to fall upon the enemy on their return. The far-sighted Lynceus, however, spotted the two Dioscuri and in the ensuing battle Idas killed Castor and Polydeuces killed Lynceus, but when he pursued Idas he was hit on the head by a stone and fell to the ground unconscious. Then Zeus struck Idas with a thunderbolt and took Polydeuces up to heaven. But the latter, seeing his twin brother dead, refused to accept immortality so Zeus decided that both should live on alternate days with the gods and in the underworld.

According to another version the cause of the quarrel was jealousy over the daughter of Leucippus. The girl was betrothed to her cousin, the descendant of Aphareus, but was carried off by the Dioscuri. This resulted in a quarrel.

A hymn sings of these Dioscuri, the sons of Zeus. Leda bore them to Zeus as saviour of the human race and of storm-tossed ships at sea. Seamen in peril sacrifice and call upon the sons of Zeus, who suddenly appear gliding in the air to calm the storm until the waves abate.

TYNDAREUS AND HIS ISSUE

A DESCENDANT of the race which sprang from the earth, Tyndareus ruled in Sparta. His father was called alternatively Oebalus or Perieres, the son of Cynortas or Aeolus. His mother was Gorgophone, the daughter of Perseus and his brothers were Icarius, the father of Penelope, Aphareus, the father of Idas, and Lynceus and Leucippus. Driven from home by his half-brother, Hippocöon, he travelled to Calydon where he married Leda, the daughter of Thestius, a sister of Meleager's mother, Althaea. Later he returned to Sparta in company with Heracles to defeat the sons of Hippocöon and to become king. Tyndareus had five children by Leda—the Dioscuri Castor and Polydeuces and three daughters: Clytemnestra, Helen and Timendra. There are many legends relating to their birth. According to one Zeus approached Leda in the guise of a swan and the same night Tyndareus also embraced her so that from Zeus she conceived Polydeuces and Helen and from her mortal husband Castor and Clytemnestra. Another version is that not Leda but Nemesis was the mother of Helen. Zeus, enamoured of Nemesis, fol-

lowed her across land and sea. In order to elude him she kept changing her guise until finally she turned into a goose, while Zeus adopted the guise of a swan. She was raped. In due course Nemesis laid an egg and hid it in a marsh where it was found by Leda. From the egg came Helen, who was brought up by Leda as her own daughter. And finally it is related that Zeus, in the guise of a swan, took refuge in Leda's lap and she brought forth an egg from which Helen emerged.

Thus Helen and the Dioscuri rank as children of both Zeus and of Tyndareus—two strong sons, the horse-tamer Castor and the formidable boxer, Polydeuces, and Helen who grew into the most beautiful of women. Apart from Helen and Clytemnestra, Tyndareus had a third daughter by Leda—Timandra. On the occasion of a sacrifice the king had forgotten to include Aphrodite and the enraged goddess cursed the three daughters. They would all be unfaithful and leave their husbands. Timandra later married Echemus, King of Tegea, in Arcady, and left him for Phyleus, son of Augeas, the favourite of the immortal gods. Helen left Menelaus and Clytemnestra abandoned Agamemnon.

Helen in her youth was carried off by Theseus on account of her beauty and taken to Aphidnae in Attica. But while Theseus was absent on his journey to Hades, the Dioscuri conquered the city and brought back their sister.

Many suitors from all over Greece appeared in Sparta to court Helen, bringing rich gifts for Tyndareus. The cunning Odysseus alone brought no gift because he foresaw that the wealthy Menelaus would win Helen in this competition, and he did not wish to waste money to no purpose. When Tyndareus noticed the number of suitors he was worried that if he promised his daughter to one of them the others would rise up in arms against him. Odysseus promised the king good advice if he would help him to win Penelope, the daughter of Icarius. When Tyndareus agreed he advised him to make all the suitors swear before the decision that they would all rally to the victor should anyone stain his honour. The suitors swore. Menelaus obtained Helen and Odysseus married Penelope. Later as a result of this oath the suitors had to join in the expedition against Troy at the summons of the Atreidae. Achilles reluctantly joined this expedi-

tion. He had not been one of the suitors because he was too young.

THE TANTALIDS

MENELAUS was descended from the race of Tantalus. Tantalus was the mountain-born King of Lydia in Asia Minor and lived in the Sipylus Mountains. He was famous for his wealth but also for his impiety, which called down upon his head the wrath of the gods. Of him it is told that once when a guest of the gods he had asked Zeus to fulfil a wish. When it was granted he revealed that his wish was to lead a life like the god. Angered by this Zeus, bound by his promise, fulfilled his wish but so that he could never enjoy his possessions and remain in perpetual anxiety he hung over his head a boulder of rock which always threatened to fall. Other versions declare that Tantalus, as the guest of the god, stole nectar and ambrosia and gave them to man, or revealed the secrets of the god, or again invited the gods to feast with him and served them up the flesh of his son, Pelops. When the gods noticed this they brought the dead man back to life and replaced the shoulder they had already eaten with one in ivory. But Pindar says: 'Tantalus summoned the gods to a feast; Poseidon, inflamed with love for Pelops, bore him away in a golden chariot to Olympus. Since he had disappeared and all searches proved of no avail one of the neighbours whispered to the other that the child had been roasted over the fire, butchered with a knife and served up at table. But I cannot indict one of the gods as the glutton and the scandalmonger was duly punished.'

No mortal ever honoured the gods more than Tantalus, but his good fortune was too much for him and after his death he was heavily punished in the underworld. There he stood up to his chin in water and each time he was thirsty and wanted to drink, it ebbed away from him. Above his head hung branches of the finest fruit and when in his hunger he tried to pick them the branches were blown away by the wind.

Other stories are told of the cunning of Tantalus, and we have already told of his unfortunate daughter, Niobe, who married Amphion of Thebes.

The son of Tantalus was Pelops, a protégé of Poseidon, who gave him a winged chariot with which he could drive across the

sea without the axles being caught by the waves. This wonderful vehicle took him across the Aegean to Pisa in Elis where Oenomaus was king. This ruler had a beautiful daughter, Hippodamia, with whom her father did not want to part—either because he loved her himself or because he knew from an oracle that he would be slain by his future son-in-law. Anyone who courted his daughter had to compete with him in a chariot race in which any contestant who attempted it must, in his opinion, inevitably be killed. Since Ares had presented him with weapons and very fast horses he set the following rules. Each suitor must take Hippodamia in his chariot and drive her across the Isthmus of Corinth. He himself offered a sacrifice, chased the suitor with his fast horses and killed him as soon as he had caught him up. In this way many suitors lost their lives and their heads were impaled on the roof of his palace.

When Pelops decided to court this girl he went down to the seashore and prayed to Poseidon to drive him in a fast chariot to Elis and stay the spear of Oenomaus, who had already killed thirteen suitors. The god heard his plea and drove him in a golden chariot with winged horses to Elis. As soon as the maiden saw the handsome youth she fell in love with him and implored the aid of her father's charioteer, Myrtilus. For love of her he agreed to be of service and removed the bolts from the axles of his master's chariot and replaced them with wax so that the wheels would fall off during the journey and the king be trampled to death. As he lay dying the king cursed his servant that he should be killed by Pelops. The curse worked: when Myrtilus tried to woo Hippodamia, Pelops hurled him into the sea.

The victorious suitor was now crowned king in place of Oenomaus and the whole peninsula was named after him the Peloponnesus. He carried a sceptre forged by Hephaestus, which Hermes had given to him on Zeus' orders and which now became a family heirloom. It was inherited by his son, Atreus, who on his deathbed handed it to his brother, Thyestes, and on his death it came into the possession of Agamemnon. Pelops and Hippodamia had six sons including Atreus and Thyestes and a nymph bore him the handsome Chrysippus. The latter carried off Laius, the father of Oedipus, to Thebes. Some say, however, that Chrysippus, who was his father's favourite, was killed by his

brothers incited by his stepmother, Hippodamia, and that Pelops cursed his sons and banished them from the country.

Much has been told of the atrocities committed by these brothers. After being banished by their father they went to Argolis, where, quarrelling for the throne, they agreed that the man to be king should work a miracle. Atreus had once made a vow to sacrifice his finest head of cattle to Artemis, but when a golden lamb was born he regretted his promise, and after strangling the lamb hid it in a chest. But his wife, Aerope, who had an adulterous relationship with his brother, Thyestes, secretly gave him the golden fleece which was now shown to the people as a sign from the gods, and in this way he became king. But Zeus, furious at this treachery, sent Hermes to Atreus with the order to challenge his brother to a second decision about the throne, dependent upon a miracle. The miracle in question was to be that the sun should run a contrary course in the sky. When Thyestes agreed the miracle happened and the people made him king.

Thyestes wandered for a long time in foreign lands and finally returned as a suppliant to his brother, bringing his little son. Atreus received him and at the feast of welcome served him up with the flesh of his own children whom he had secretly slain. After the meal when Thyestes recognized the crime by the hands and feet of the children, he knocked over the table and uttered a curse: the whole house of his brother should eventually be ruined. Once more he was banished from the land with his sole remaining son, Aegisthus. But another version says that after this sinister banquet, Thyestes left with no children and on the grounds of an oracle which promised him revenge on his brother if he begot a son from his own daughter, Pelopia, she bore him Aegisthus, who later slew Atreus and also murdered Agamemnon.

The sons of Atreus were Menelaus, King of Sparta and husband of Helen, who presented him with one daughter—Hermione—and Agamemnon, who ruled in Mycenae and over a part of the Peloponnesus. According to Homer his children were Chrysothemis, Laodice, Iphianassa and Orestes. According to later tradition they were called Iphigenia, Electra and Orestes.

Another son of Pelops—Alcathous—became King of Megara after killing a lion which terrorized the land. Apollo helped him to fortify the citadel. His daughter, Eriboia, became the wife of Telamon and mother of Aeas.

SISYPHUS

WE must now return to one of the sons of Aeolus. This intelligent and cunning son, Sisyphus, was ruler of the city of Ephyra—this city was later identified with Corinth—which he himself had founded. He was so sly that he even outwitted death. When he revealed to the river god, Asopus, that Zeus had ravished his daughter, Aegina, the King of the Gods grew very angry and sent death to meet him. But Sisyphus chained this unwelcome guest and for a long time no more men died on earth, until Ares eventually freed the prisoner. But when Sisyphus' last hour really came and he felt that his end was upon him, he ordered his wife not to send the usual tribute with him to Hades when he was dead. As soon as he arrived in Hades and the god of the underworld learnt of this lapse he sent Sisyphus back to the world to remind his wife of her duty. But as soon as the cunning fellow arrived home he returned no more to Hades but remained in the world until he finally died of old age. But eventually he received his punishment. Using his hands and feet as a lever he had to push a block of stone up a hill; but as soon as he arrived at the top and tried to topple the stone over the other side it sped down the incline once more with a thunderous roar.

On one occasion during his lifetime Sisyphus met a man who was his equal in cunning—Autolycus. This man had the power of making everything he touched invisible, and Hermes himself, the cunning patron of thieves, had taught him the arts of thieving and perjury. He stole herds of cattle, removed their brandings so that the beasts could never be reclaimed by their rightful owners. Sisyphus, however, had placed his mark under the hooves of the cattle, where Autolycus did not notice them, and easily recognized them among the robber's herd. On his mother's side the cunning Autolycus was grandfather of Odysseus, also a past master of cunning, and it was said that as soon as he had recognized the intelligence of Sisyphus he gave

him his daughter, who became the mother of Odysseus, who thus inherited the cunning of both men.

Odysseus was also reported to be the son of Laertes, and we will now deal with this hero, for his family tree is unique and has no connections with other races.

ODYSSEUS

IN the family of Odysseus, whose home country was Ithaca, according to the decree of Zeus one son was the rule. Arcisius begat Laertes, Laertes begat Odysseus and the latter begat Telemachus. The following story is told of the father of Cephalus who lived on the island of Cephallonia. Since he had no children he consulted the oracle about possible issue and received the reply that he should have intercourse with the first woman he met. On his return to his homeland the first creature he met was a female bear. He had intercourse with her and she changed into a woman and bore him Arcisius. This ursine progeny was the father of Laertes.

Laertes ruled in Ithaca. He married the wily daughter of Autolycus, who bore him Odysseus and among other daughters Ctimene. When Odysseus was born Autolycus visited Ithaca and when asked to christen the child said: 'I have come here spurning many men and women. The boy shall, therefore, be called Odysseus which means "the spurner"'. But when he grows up and visits his mother on Parnassus, where I possess much treasure, I will make him rich and then send him home in good spirits.' Later Odysseus visited his grandfather and grandmother Amphithea. On one occasion he went out hunting with the sons of Autolycus and was wounded in the thigh by a boar, so that for the rest of his life he bore a scar.

As a boy Odysseus displayed his prowess as an archer. Later he boasted that no man, apart from Philoctetes, could surpass him in this art—not even Heracles and Eurytus of Oechalia, who used to vie with the gods in archery. Eurytus died young because he challenged Apollo to a contest and bequeathed his bow to his son, Iphitus. One day when men from Messene had stolen a herd of sheep from Ithaca, Laertes sent his young son to fetch them back. On his long journey to Messene he came to

Lacedaemon, where, in the house of his host, Ortilochus, he met Iphitus. The latter was looking for twelve mares and their foals which had been stolen and he made friends with Odysseus, presenting him with his bow in exchange for a lance and a sword. On his further search for his horses Iphitus met Heracles, who knew all about the theft, for the mares were in his own stables. He treated Iphitus as a guest but later flung him over a cliff in order to take his revenge on his father, Eurytus, who had once wronged him.

To procure poison for his arrows Odysseus sailed to Ephyra to seek Ilus, the son of Memerus, who refused for fear of offending the gods. Later, however, he obtained poison for his arrows from Anchialus, King of the Taphians, the father of Mentès.

Laertes abdicated in favour of his young son, whose realm consisted of Ithaca, Cephallonia, Samos and Zacynthus and a part of the opposite mainland. The son of Laertes was famous for his never-failing good advice and his subtle inventive mind. He enjoyed the pleasures of life and once said to the Phaeacians: 'There is no more pleasant goal, I think, than when joy reigns among the people, when men sit drinking in their halls listening to the minstrels, the table is well laden with bread and meat and the cupbearer fills the beakers with wine. This seems to me the most precious thing on earth.' And to Nausicaa, the daughter of the Phaeacian king, he said: 'There is nothing better or finer than when husband and wife in costly attire live in their house to the chagrin of their enemies and to the joy of their friends. They themselves are to be deemed fortunate.'

Later in this book we shall tell of the adventures of Odysseus in the Trojan War.

THE DESCENDANTS OF SISYPHUS

THE son of Sisyphus was Glaucus, who fed human flesh to the speedy horses he kept in Potniae in Boeotia, only to be devoured by them eventually. The son of Glaucus was Bellerophon, of whom we have already told. The grandson of Bellerophon was the Glaucus who fought on the side of the Trojans in the war. With his cousin, Sarpedon, he came to the aid of the Trojans as leader of the Lycians. When Diomedes, the son of Tydeus,

performed his most heroic deeds before Troy, fighting even against the gods, he met on the battlefield an unknown adversary whose godlike appearance caught his eye. He challenged him to give his name before they started to fight. When Glaucus admitted that he came from Ephyra and traced his ancestry back to Sisyphus, told him the story of Bellerophon and that he himself was the son of Hippolochus and grandson of Bellerophon, Diomedes thrust his lance into the earth and replied that his own grandfather, Oeneus, had once played host to Glaucus' grandfather and exchanged gifts with him.

'... But I have said enough to show that in me you will now have a good friend in the heart of Argos, and I shall have you in Lycia, if ever I visit that country. So let us avoid each other's spears, even in the *mélée*, since there are plenty of the Trojans and their famous allies for me to kill, if I have the luck and speed to catch them, and plenty of Achaeans for you to slaughter, if you can. And let us exchange our armour, so that everyone may know that our grandfathers' friendship has made friends of us.'

Iliad, VI, 154f

They shook hands and exchanged weapons. Glaucus exchanging his golden armour for the iron armour of Diomedes.

The Lycian prince, Sarpedon, who boasted Zeus for a father, was descended from Laodamia, the daughter of Bellerophon. After Hector he was the greatest hero on the Trojan side. In battle he killed the son of Heracles, Tlepolemus, the Zeus-born son of a grandson of Zeus. But death awaited him, too, before the wall of Troy. When Patroclus, wearing the gleaming armour of Achilles, rushed upon him in the fray his heavenly father was filled with compassion for this beloved mortal and reflected whether he should rescue him and send him back alive to his home in Lycia. But Hera intervened, saying that many another god would protect his own son from death. So in honour of his son, Zeus let fall a bloody rain and Sarpedon was slain by Patroclus. On the point of death he called to Glaucus to prevent the Achaeans from stealing his weapons. But Glaucus himself was wounded and could bring no aid; then he prayed to Apollo and the god listened and gave him healing strength. But while a great battle started round the corpses of the fallen, Zeus

ordered Apollo to carry the body of his son from the battlefield and have it taken to Lycia for burial by Hypnos (Sleep) and Thanatos (Death).

There is another legend of Sarpedon which maintains that he was not the son of Laodamia and Zeus, and thus of the race of Sisyphus, but the son of Zeus and Europa, and, therefore, a brother of Minos and Rhadamanthus.

ATHAMAS AND HIS CHILDREN

A SECOND son of Aeolus was Athamas, who ruled in Boeotia. His wife was Nephele (the cloud), and she bore him two children, a son—Phrixus—and a daughter—Helle. But when he married Ino, the daughter of Cadmus, Nephele left him and returned to the sky. From Ino Athamas had two sons—Learchus and Melicertes—and when the stepmother tried to oust Nephele's children she devised the following plan. She persuaded the women of the land to roast the wheat reserved for sowing without their husbands noticing it; as a result the crops did not ripen and Athamas sent messengers to consult the Delphic oracle to ask the god how he could overcome the barrenness of the land. Ino persuaded these men to say that the oracle had replied that Phrixus should be sacrificed to Zeus. As soon as this became known, Athamas was compelled by his subjects to lead his son to the altar. The latter, with his sister Helle, was spirited away by his mother, Nephele, on a golden ram which Hermes had brought and which bore them into the sky and over land and sea. As they flew over the narrow strait which lies between Sigion and the Chersonnesus dividing Asia from Europe, Helle fell into the sea and drowned. Since then this sea has been called the sea of Helle or the Hellespont. Phrixus came to the land of the Colchians where Aeëtes the son of Helios ruled in Aea on the Phasis; he was received cordially and given one of the king's daughters in marriage. Phrixus sacrificed the ram with the golden fleece to Zeus, who had helped him to flee, and presented the fleece to Aeëtes, who nailed it to a tree in the grove of Ares.

But the evil stepmother, Ino, was punished by the gods. She had called down upon her head in particular the anger of Hera,

since she and her husband had reared Dionysus the son of Zeus and her sister, Semele. She went mad, killed both her sons, Learchus and Melicertes, and then flung herself into the sea. She was then raised to the immortals as a Nereid named Leucothea. Later, when Odysseus was battling against the storm in his raft, she helped him by giving him her veil as a lifebelt. The corpse of Melicertes was carried to the Isthmus of Corinth by a dolphin where it was buried by Sisyphus, who founded the Isthmian Games in his honour. According to another saga, Athamas killed his own son, Learchus, and on being driven from the land asked the oracle where he should settle. He received the reply: 'In the place where you received hospitality from the wild beasts.' After many wanderings he came at last to a spot where some wolves were eating a sheep. When they caught sight of him they left their meal and fled. The exile settled here.

SALMONEUS AND TYRO

A THIRD son of Aeolus was Salmoneus, who wandered from Thessaly to Elis and founded a city there. In his arrogance he flouted Zeus by imitating his thunder and lightning. He compelled his subjects to make sacrifices to him and cheated the god of his dues. Upon this Zeus destroyed him with a thunderbolt and razed his city to the ground with all its inhabitants. His daughter, Tyro, loved Enipeus, the most beautiful of all river gods, and in her longing she would wander along his banks. Poseidon approached her in the guise of this god. A dark cloud as high as a mountain descended from the sky to hide the embraces of the god and the mortal maiden. As soon as the ruler of the sea had gratified his love he revealed himself to her and announced the birth of godlike sons. Then he returned to the sea and his mistress bore Pelias and Neleus. But the mother abandoned the twins whom she had secretly brought into the world and they were found and reared by a shepherd. In the meantime, Tyro suffered greatly at the hands of her evil step-mother, Sidero, who ill-treated her, cut off her hair and locked her in a cell. But as soon as her sons grew up and, with the aid of their father god, recognized their mother, Pelias killed the step-mother, although she had fled to the grove of Hera. Tyro then

married her uncle, Cretheus, and bore him three sons—Jason, Pheres and Amythaon.

THE ISSUE OF NELEUS AND AMYTHAON

AFTER the death of Cretheus Pelias ruled in Thessaly and built the city of Iolchos after driving his brother, Neleus, from the land. The exile wandered into the Peloponnesus and founded Pylos as his seat. He married Chloris, the daughter of the Jasid Amphion, who ruled over the Minyans in Boeotian Orchomenos, and she presented him with twelve sons including Periclymenus and the young Nestor and a daughter, Pero.

Periclymenus had received the gift from his grandfather, Poseidon, of being able to change his shape at will into a bird, an ant, a bee or a snake. When Heracles once attacked Pylos all the sons of Neleus entered the fray, but they were all killed except Nestor and the city destroyed. Periclymenus failed to avoid his fate, although he used his art of metamorphosis, and was killed by Heracles with the help of Athena. The gods intervened in this battle—Poseidon, Apollo and Hades on the side of the Pylians—and Heracles is reported to have wounded Ares and Hera. Nestor alone survived and joined the Gerenians where he became a stout warrior and in particular a superb charioteer.

The Pylians were constantly at war with the Elians or Epeians, partly on account of cattle thefts, partly because Augeas, the King of Elis, who should have sent a four-in-hand belonging to the Pylians to the Elian Games, kept it for himself. Thereupon the young Nestor, with his Pylians, conquered the Elians and brought home many head of cattle. While the Pylians were distributing the booty and offering sacrifices, the Epeians, joined by the Molionids, who at that time were quite young, set out on a punitive expedition. Neleus wanted to keep his own young son out of the battle and refused to give him a chariot. Nestor stole away on foot, accomplished great deeds of prowess—killing Mulius, the stepson of Augeas and husband of the sorceress, Agamede, and would also have killed the Molionids had their father not enveloped them in a black cloud and withdrawn them from the battle.

Nestor also fought in his youth against the Arcadians, killing

their leading warrior, Erenthalion, who wore the magnificent armour of the slinger Arithous. At the games in honour of the Epeian king, Amarynceus, he was the victor in the boxing and wrestling, in the foot race and spear throwing, but was beaten in the chariot races by the Molionids.

As an old man, in the third age of the human race, Nestor left for the Trojan War with his two sons, Antilochus and Thrasymedes. The former fell at the hand of Memnon, giving his life in the battle to rescue his father. After the war Thrasymedes returned with Nestor to Pylos. The old warrior continued to live here with his sons, the youngest of whom had been born at the beginning of the Trojan War. His youngest son was Pisisaistratus. When Telemachus came later to Pylos seeking news of his father, Odysseus, he found Nestor still alive.

A later descendant of Neleus' son, Periclymenus, namely his great-grandson, Melanthus, when driven out by the Heraclids wandered to Athens, where he seized the power. Neleus' grandson went to Asia Minor where he founded the city of Miletus and other Ionian settlements.

Nestor's sister, the daughter of Neleus, was Pero. The girl had many suitors including Bias, the son of Amythaon, brother of Melampus and a cousin of Pero. But the father would give his daughter only to the man who brought him back as a dowry the cattle of Phylacus, King of Phylace in Thessaly, and his son, Iphiclus. Melampus, the soothsayer, declared himself ready to help his brother, although by his gift of divination he knew the fate that awaited him. In fact, as he had foreseen, he was caught trying to steal the cattle and kept in chains for a year in a house watched over by a married couple. Just before the year ended the soothsayer heard the death-watch beetles in the beams talking to each other and saying that they had nearly bored through the wood—for he understood the language of beasts. Then he asked his guard to carry him out on a stretcher, the man taking the head and the wife—who had always mistreated him—the foot end. As they passed through the door into the open air the house collapsed and the evil woman was crushed by the falling debris. When the guard reported this to the king and Melampus introduced himself as a soothsayer, the king asked his advice about his son, Iphiclus—for the boy was unable to produce

children—and promised to give him the herd of cattle if he healed his son. The seer killed two steers and placed the cut-up meat for the birds to eat. He thus learned from an old vulture the reason for the king's son's impotence and at the same time the appropriate remedy. Phylacus, when Iphiclus was still a boy, had once castrated a ram and laid the bloody knife near his son, who in terror had run away. Phylacus had then plunged the knife into the trunk of an oak and in the course of time the bark had grown over the knife until it was now invisible. Anyone who found the knife, removed the rust and made Iphiclus drink the concoction soaked in wine for ten days would recover his potency. The knife was found and Iphiclus was healed. Later he begat two sons—Podarces and Protesilaus—both of whom fought in the Trojan War.

Melampus duly received his herd in payment, drove it to Pylos and thus won Pero for his brother. Pero bore Bias Talaus, who had several sons, including Adrastus, Parthenopaeus and Mecisteus who later took part in the expedition of the Seven against Thebes, and a daughter—Eriphyle—who became wife of Amphiaraus.

This soothsayer, Melampus, was the son of Amythaon, grandson of Tyro and Cretheus. He belonged to a famous race of seers noted for their high intelligence, a gift which they had received from Zeus. In his youth he had lived in the country outside Pylos and not far from his house was an oak in which some snakes had nested. When his servant killed the snakes he collected firewood, burnt the dead reptiles but spared and reared the young. As soon as they were fully grown they licked his ears while he was asleep and when he woke up next morning he was able to understand the speech of the birds from whom he learnt the future and imparted his knowledge to man. He also learnt the art of augury from Apollo himself. We have already related how he healed the children of Proetus.

Melampus' great grandson was Amphiaraus who, as we have seen, took part in the expedition of the Seven against Thebes. He married Eriphyle, sister of Adrastus King of Argos, who bore him two sons—Alcmaeon, who avenged his father's death on his mother and Amphilochus, who went to Troy and was killed on the homeward journey after the destruction of the city.

Another great-grandson of Melampus was Theoclymenus. He had been forced to leave his country after committing a murder and in his flight came to Pylos. There he met Telemachus, the son of Odysseus, who was about to return to Ithaca. On the plea of the fugitive he took him back to Ithaca and on many later occasions the grateful exile served him as a soothsayer and augurer.

On the day of retribution when the suitors of Penelope were to die at the hands of Odysseus, they sat at their meal in the palace. Athena befuddled their senses making them give vent to uncontrolled mirth and distorting their faces until they gobbled raw meat with the tears streaming from their eyes. At last they realized the dread omen. Then Theoclymenus cried to them: 'Unhappy mortals! What a terrible fate has befallen you. Your head and limbs are veiled in darkest night, your complaints ring out and your cheeks are wet with tears. The walls and columns of the hall are flecked with blood; the atrium and the courtyard are full of shadows striving to reach the darkness of the underworld. The sun is extinguished in the sky and darkness enfolds us.' But the suitors mocked him, believing that he was out of his mind, and in this way they met their fate.

ADMETUS AND ALCESTIS

ADMETUS, King of Pherae in Thessaly, noted for his piety and wealth in head of cattle, was descended from Pheres, the brother of Amythaon, son of Tyro. His wealth was partly due to the fact that Apollo had served him for a year and was well disposed towards him, having recognized his nobility. When Zeus killed Asclepius the son of Apollo the sun god, in revenge, slew the Cyclops whom the gods had forged out of the thunderbolt and as a result, on the orders of Zeus, he had to serve a mortal for a whole year. So the god came as a shepherd to Admetus and contrived that the cows always brought twin calves into the world. Apollo expressed his friendship to Admetus by teaching him much wisdom. He taught him the following saw: 'Man must live on earth as though he had only one more day to enjoy its light and at the same time as though he still had fifty years' happiness ahead of him. To be pious and good-natured is the best that can

befall a mortal.' Thus Admetus, instructed by the god, practised his wisdom, and said himself: 'Love good men, my friend, and avoid the evil for they have no gratitude.'

Apollo also helped the king to win a wife—Alcestis, the most beautiful of Pelias' daughters. Pelias, King of Iolchos, was the son of Poseidon and Tyro. Alcestis was so beautiful that her father would give her in marriage only to the man who could yoke a boar and a lion to his chariot. Admetus managed to do this with the aid of Apollo and received Alcestis as his wife. At the marriage ceremony, however, he forgot to sacrifice to Artemis and when he went up to the bridal chamber he found it full of snakes—a sinister omen. Thereupon, Apollo promised to appease his sister, Artemis, and outwitted the Fates for his royal friend. In the event of Admetus dying he could be released from death if he could find a volunteer to take his place. But when the day of death arrived and he looked round for a deputy no one was prepared to make this sacrifice—not even the old men of his court. Then his wife offered to go down to Hades in his place. The sacrifice was accepted and she died. But Persephone rewarded this constancy and returned Alcestis to her husband. We have already given another version of the liberation of Alcestis from the underworld.

Another son of this royal couple was Eumelus, who took eleven ships and men from Iolchos, Pherae and other Thessalian cities to Troy. He also took the fast horses which Apollo had raised when he was serving his father. In the games which Achilles organized in honour of his fallen friend, Patroclus, Eumelus entered his team in the chariot race and he would have won the palm had not Athena, wishing to help her protégé, Diomedes, broken the wheels of Eumelus' chariot.

THE VOYAGE OF THE ARGONAUTS

THE REASONS AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE JOURNEY

STRIFE had broken out between the sons of Tyro. Pelias drove his brother, Neleus, from the land, wrested the throne from his half-brother, Jason, and ruled alone in Iolchos. Jason continued to live in the city but sent his son to the Centaur, Chiron, to be educated and to protect him from the perfidy of Pelias.

Pelias had once been told by the oracle that he would die by the hand of an Aeolid, and that he must beware the attack of a man who would meet him wearing only one shoe. One day Jason, after a long wandering, came to the city of Iolchos and entered the palace of Pelias. While fording a river he had lost one of his sandals in the mud and appeared before the king with one bare foot. Pelias, on seeing the stranger, remembered the oracle and shuddered when Jason, who did not recognize the king, admitted quite openly that he intended to restore his father's inheritance. Meeting his father, his brothers (Pheres and Amythaon) and their sons (Admetus and Melampus) he conferred with them as to how they could regain their rights. A few days later he appeared once more before the king and demanded the throne back. To avert the threatening misfortune the latter ordered him to go to Colchis and bring back from King Aeëtes the golden fleece which Phrixus had nailed to a tree in the grove of Ares. Aeolus, grandfather of Phrixus, was also an ancestor of Jason. The king thought that his rival would be killed on this journey, but Jason accepted this challenge.

According to plans presented by Athene the carpenter, Agus, built a fifty-oared ship—the Argo—and at the summons

of Jason, heroes hastened from all over Greece to take part in the voyage, among others Orpheus, the singer; Admetus from Phærae; the soothsayer, Mopsus; the brothers, Telamon and Peleus; the helmsman, Tiphys; the coxswain, Euphemus; the Dioscuri; Castor and Pollux, the sons of Aphareus; Idas and Lynceus, the swift sons of Boreas; Calais and Zethes; Meleager and Heracles, and finally—against his father's will but out of friendship for Jason—Acastus, the son of Pelias.

ADVENTURE IN LEMNOS

THE voyage began from the harbour of Iolchos. On the first stage of their journey the Argonauts came to the island of Lemnos, where Hypsipyle ruled as queen over a matriarchy. The women of Lemnos had killed all their husbands because they brought back Thracian girls as booty, thus offending the island women. The crew of Argos were received hospitably and invited to stay on the island. Jason lived in the palace of the queen, while the others dwelt in the houses of the abandoned Lemnian women, and there was much gaiety. Heracles alone, with a few companions, remained in the ship. Since the days passed and their departure was continually postponed he urged the men to leave their mistresses. They were all the more reluctant because the immortal Cabiri, who lived on the island, were well disposed and plied them generously with wine. These Cabiri—three men and three women—were children or grandchildren of Hephaestus and were venerated above all on the island of Samothrace as the 'Great Gods'.

Many of the children of the women of Lemnos and the Argonauts later became famous. We have already mentioned the sons of Jason and Hypsipyle. The following legend is told of the other descendants of the Lemnian women. They were driven from the island by the Pelasgians, and came to Lacedaemon where they pitched their camp at the foot of Taygetus. When the inhabitants of the land saw their camp fire, they sent a messenger to ask who they were and whence they came. 'We are Minyans,' they replied, 'children of the Argonauts, born on Lemnos. We have been driven out by the Pelasgians and have come to our fathers to beg their hospitality.' This hospitality was accorded

them because the Dioscuri had also taken part in the voyage. So they remained in the land and married Spartan women. Later, however, they became very unpopular by their misdeeds and the Lacedaemonians decided to expel them. The men were imprisoned but their wives—some of whom belonged to the noblest Spartan families—begged to be allowed to visit their husbands. Their innocent request was granted, but they exchanged clothes with the prisoners who were able to escape in disguise and return to Taygetus.

About this time (it was in the seventh generation after the voyage of the *Argo*) Theseus, the son of Autesion a descendant of Cadmus, and uncle of Procles and Eurysthenes, was made guardian of his two nephews in Sparta. When they grew up and assumed the power, Theseus wandered to the island of Calliste, taking some of the Minyans from Taygetus with the consent of the Spartans. On this island he met his kinsmen of the race of Cadmus. They had been left behind to colonize the island by Cadmus when he was on his journey to find his sister, Europa, who had been carried off by Zeus. The island was now called Thera, after these new colonists. Among the Minyans who left with Theseus were also the issue of the coxswain of the *Argo*—Euphenius—who was a son of Poseidon. One of his descendants in the seventh century was Battus, who founded the city of Cyrene in North Africa and from whom the later Battiad princes traced their descent. The poet, Callimachus, also boasted of his descent from the Argonauts. Theseus, however, left his son, Oeolycus, behind in Sparta, and his grandson, Aegeus, founded the family of the Aegidae some of whom later migrated to Thera and from there with the settlers to Cyrene.

CYZICUS

THE *Argo* eventually left Lemnos and came to Samothrace. Here, on the advice of Odysseus, the heroes were initiated into the mysteries of the Cabiri. Then they crossed the Hellespont and landed in the Propontis at the city of Cyzicus, ruled by the young eponymous king of the Dolionae. They were received hospitably and while they were ashore Heracles, who once more had remained behind to watch the ship, was attacked by the six-

handed giants from the neighbouring mountains. The monsters tried to close the harbour entrance with boulders and to destroy the Argo. But Heracles slew many of them with his arrows before his companions rushed to his aid. Then they set sail from Cyzicus. During the night, however, a storm blew them back to their point of departure. The Dolionae, who had not recognized them, took them for enemies and a bitter struggle took place in which many of them were killed, including their king, Cyzicus. Not until the following morning was the tragic error discovered. In a three-day funeral feast the dead were buried but Clite, the king's young wife, killed herself and from the tears of the nymphs who mourned her issued a spring which has since borne her name.

HYLAS

THE Argonauts were held up for a long time here by great storms until, after twelve days, a kingfisher appeared and the soothsayer, Mopsus, saw in this a good omen. Jason should scale the heights of nearby Dindymon and sacrifice to the mother of the gods. Argus, the skilled carpenter, carved a figure of the goddess from a vinestock. It was placed on the mountain, a stone altar erected and sacrifices were made. The storm then abated and the Argo could put to sea once more. On the way, however, Heracles' oar broke and they had to put in at Chios. While his comrades pitched their camp and prepared the meal, Heracles went into the forest to find wood for his new oar. He was accompanied by his young friend, the handsome Hylas, who hurried on ahead to fetch water from a spring. But the nymph of the source caught sight of him, embraced him tenderly with her arms and with her kisses drew him down into the depths. His screams were heard in the distance by his comrade, Polyphemus, who told Heracles. The hero raged all night through the forest, loudly calling the name of his friend. When the Argo put to sea next morning they noticed that Heracles was missing. While the heroes were discussing whether to turn back and fetch the absentee, the sea god, Glaucus, rose from the depths and told them that Heracles would no longer be travelling with them. He had to return for further labours in the service of Eurystheus until he had completed the twelve. Then he

would join the company of the gods. Polyphemus would found the city of Chios and Hylas has been chosen to be the husband of the nymph. And so it happened and since that day the inhabitants of Chios celebrate each year the disappearance of Hylas.

AMYCUS

A FAVOURABLE wind brought the seafarers after several days in sight of the land of the Bebrycians. There lived Amycus, the powerful giant, son of Poseidon, who challenged all comers to a bout of fisticuffs. He duly challenged the Argonauts to send him their best boxer. Polydeuces volunteered to be his adversary and after a hard struggle managed to slay Amycus. The Bebrycians now hurried up fully armed to avenge the death of their comrade and were routed after a stiff battle.

PHINEUS

FROM here the heroes sailed through the Bosphorus to the coast of Bithynia. Here dwelt the seer, Phineus, who had once been severely punished by Zeus because he had misused his gift of divination against the will of the gods and revealed too many of Zeus' plans. When given a choice he preferred a long life as a blind man. His wish was granted and he was now a sightless old man. To plague him Zeus also sent the spirits of the storm, the harpies who seized away all the food that was put before him, befouling the rest so that it was uneatable and flying off leaving behind an unbearable stench. In this way he lost weight and vitality until he was a bundle of skin and bones.

When the Argonauts arrived Phineus foresaw the end of his misfortune. He was related to the Boreads because he had married their sister, Cleopatra, the daughter of Boreas and Oreithyia. They said that they were prepared to help him provided he swore they would not arouse the anger of the gods. After he had reassured them they stood by him with drawn swords. A meal was brought in and as soon as the old man began to eat the harpies immediately flew down. With great shouts the swift sons of the wind god, Boreas, fell upon them, pursued them over the sea and killed them. According to another version, Iris,

the messenger of Zeus, intervened. They were to stop their pursuit and these tormenting spirits would not return to Phineus. The old man was freed from his misfortune and could now have his first meal. In gratitude he showed his benefactors the route they must take for Colchis and gave them good advice for their future journey. Just as Phineus had lived in darkness, the same fate overtook the sons of his first marriage with the daughter of Boreas, for when he took a second wife the stepmother, in her hatred, put them in prison and blinded them.

THE SYMPLEGADES

AFTER the Argonauts had erected an altar to the twelve gods and offered sacrifices, they embarked and soon came to the Symplegades, also known as the Cyaneae, two huge drifting cliffs at the entrance to the Black Sea. From time to time they came together, crushing the ships that sailed through the channel. Phineus had told them how to overcome this danger and they followed his advice. They carried a dove and when they approached the rocks released the bird, which came safely through the colliding cliffs with only the loss of a few tail feathers. Now they rowed strongly through the choppy waves and with the help of Athene managed to steer the ship through, although the stern was crushed. Since those days the two rocks have been rooted to the shores of the Bosphorus.

Sailing along the northern coast of Asia Minor the Argonauts had to overcome many dangers. They lost Tiphys, the helmsman, and Idmon, the soothsayer, who was killed by a wild boar. Both were buried with all honour and the king of that land, Lycus, a descendant of Tantalus, who had been a generous host, promised to tend their graves.

THE STYMPHALIAN BIRDS

PHINEUS had already told them of the danger that awaited them near the Island of Ares (Aretias). The Stymphalian birds, which Heracles had driven from the Arcadian marshes, had settled here. As soon as the ship approached the island one of these birds met them and let fall one of its sharp-pointed feathers

which wounded Oeleus in the shoulder. A second bird was shot by one of the heroes. Then the Argonauts covered their helmets with waving bushes and half of them hid beneath their shields holding their spears, while the others rowed. At the same time they let forth loud cries. In this way they were protected against the falling quills; their shouts scared the birds away from the island and they were never seen again.

THE BATTLE FOR THE GOLDEN FLEECE

So the Argonauts came to the land of Colchis, to Aia, the city of Aeëtes on the River Phasis. King Aeëtes was not disposed to surrender the golden fleece to Jason, and gave him a difficult task to perform before he would part with it: to plough a field with wild fire-belching oxen. At the start Aeëtes yoked himself to the plough and drew it across the field making straight furrows, then he challenged Jason to do the same. This would have been difficult, but he had already won the love of the king's daughter, Medea, a very powerful sorceress who had given him an ointment which made him invulnerable to the oxen's fiery breath. He successfully accomplished his task. When Aeëtes saw this he sent him to fetch the fleece, hoping that he would be killed for it lay in a forest and was guarded by an enormous dragon which held it firmly in its teeth. But Jason killed the dragon and carried off his golden booty.

There is another version to the story. After Jason had ploughed the field he had to sow dragons' teeth from which sprang fully armed men with whom he was to fight. But on the advice of Medea he threw a stone among them. They quarrelled over the stone and killed each other, Jason putting his sword to good use. In his fight with the dragon, too, his mistress helped him by putting the beast to sleep with a magic potion so that he could remove the golden fleece from its jaws.

THE RETURN JOURNEY OF THE ARGO. ABSYRTUS

THE Argonauts set sail from Colchis and Jason took with him Medea, whom he had promised to marry. But Aeëtes immediately manned a ship and set out in pursuit of the fugitives. In

order to gain an advance on him the Argonauts, on the advice of Medea, slew her brother, Absyrtus, who had accompanied her, cut him in pieces and strewed his limbs in the water.

They escaped while the pursuers picked up the pieces of the murdered man.

THE ARGONAUTS IN LIBYA

AFTER losing their way the Argonauts sailed across the ocean to the coast of Libya where their ship was blown up on to the beach. The heroes placed their boat on their shoulders and carried it day after day across the desert to the lake of Tritons. There the sea god, Triton, appeared in the guise of a native and presented them with a clod of earth and showed them how they could extricate their ship from the inland sea through a channel which led to the Mediterranean. Euphemus, the coxswain, the son of Poseidon, took the clod of earth but carelessly let it fall into the sea. He did not know that possession of this piece of earth signified kingship over the land. From the spot where it sank into the waters rose the island Thera. Then Medea made a prophecy. The issue of Euphemus would, in the seventeenth generation, found the city of Cyrene in Libya. Had he dropped the sod in his own land on the foothills of Taenarus at the entrance into Hades, then this city foundation would have taken place in the fourth generation. Her prophecy proved true for in the seventeenth generation (700 B.C.) Battus, a descendant of Euphemus, leaving Thera, founded the city of Cyrene and from him stemmed the kings of that city.

TALUS IN CRETE

ON the Island of Crete they met the giant, Talus, who although made of iron was still a living creature and could only be wounded in one part of his body. He was the custodian of the island and he wandered constantly round the coast hurling blocks of stone at any strangers. He could also lie in the fire until he was white hot and then he would embrace his adversaries until they were burn to a cinder. One of the Argonauts killed him with an arrow. It was also said that when Medea had turned him mad by enchantments he had fallen and wounded himself in the vulnerable part of his body until he lost all his blood.

JASON AND MEDEA IN IOLCHOS

AT last they reached Iolchos and Jason handed over the golden fleece to Pelias. Here he lived with Medea and she bore him a son, Medius, who was given to the Centaur, Chiron, to be educated. Medea also used her enchantment to rejuvenate Jason and his father, Aeson. There is a rumour of a great funeral feast laid on in honour of Pelias by his son, Acastus, at which the heroes of the voyage of the Argo were present.


But there is another version to this story. Jason, on his return to Iolchos, wanted to take revenge for the many wrongs that Pelias had done to himself and to his father. His revenge was planned with the help of Medea's black arts. Medea promised the daughters of Pelias that she would rejuvenate their father. To overcome the girls' resistance the sorceress slaughtered and cut up a ram before their eyes. She cooked the pieces with magic herbs in a pot, and then changed the beast back into a lamb. The daughters were finally persuaded to kill their father, to cut him in pieces and cook him in a cauldron. But since they did not know the magic potion, Pelias was not restored to life and Medea and Jason left Iolchos.

JASON AND MEDEA IN CORINTH

THEY journeyed to Corinth where they settled after being received by the king. After some years Jason fell in love with the king's daughter and wanted to banish Medea, but the witch decided to take a terrible revenge for his infidelity. She sent the bride a mantle and a coronet, but when the king's daughter donned these gifts the magic worked and the girl was consumed by flames. Her father, who also touched the mantle, died a gruesome death. Medea also killed the children she had born to Jason that her revenge might be complete. Then Helios, her ancestor, sent a car drawn by a dragon to carry her away.

THE FATE OF MEDEA AND JASON

MEDEA found refuge in Athens with King Aegeus, but she had to leave this asylum too because she wanted to get rid of the



king's son, Theseus, by poisoning him. Then she went to the Aryans in Asia who since then have been called the Medes after her or her son, Medius. Later she is supposed to have returned to Colchis and restored her father, Aeëtes, to the throne from which he had been driven by his brother.

Jason had placed the Argo in the temple of Poseidon on the Isthmus of Corinth as an offering. But one day as he lay down beneath the hull, one of the timbers fell and crushed him to death.

THE ISSUE OF ATLAS, SON OF IAPETUS

THE PLEIADES

THE Oceanid, Pleione, bore to Atlas the son of Iapetus seven daughters—the Pleiades, today a bright constellation in our night sky. Here they flee before the constellation of Orion into the sea, as formerly they fled on earth from the importunity of Orion, the hunter.

Three of these girls were loved by Zeus—Maia, who bore him a son, Hermes; Taygete, from whom the Hellenic heroes were descended and Electra, from whom the Trojan royal house traced its descent. A fourth Pleiad, Alcyone, with Poseidon as her lover was the ancestress of the Boeotian race to whom Antiope and her two sons, Amphion and Zethus, belonged.

Taygete, seduced by Zeus, was as a result of her lapse changed into a doe by Artemis. Later, however, she returned to her human form. The hind with the golden antlers was now sacred to Artemis and was caught by Heracles while in the service of Eurystheus. The mountain, Taygetus, in Sparta is called after her and she bore to Zeus Lacedaemon from which the country of Sparta takes its name. The son of Lacedaemon was Amyclas, who gave his name to the city of Amyclae. His sons were Hyacinthus and Cynortas. The fair Hyacinthus was loved by Apollo and inadvertently killed by the god during play. Then he was taken up to Olympus and a great feast in his honour was celebrated each year in Amyclae. The son of Cynortas was Perieres, who married Gorgophone, the daughter of Perseus. This is the same Perieres whom we have already met as the son of Aeolus. Genealogists differ very greatly on this subject.

From the marriage of Perieres with Gorgophone there were four sons—Icarius, Tyndareus, Aphareus and Leucippus. We have already referred to these in an earlier chapter.

A grandson of the Pleiad, Alcyone, was Orion, son of Hyrieus. He also ranks as the son of Poseidon and possessed the gift of walking on the waters. Once he came to the Island of Chios where he was hospitably received by Oenopion. In a drunken orgy, however, he raped the wife of his host—in other versions it was his daughter—and as a result his eyes were put out and he was expelled from the land. So he came, blind, to Lemnos where Hephaestus had a blacksmith's forge and the god gave him the mechanical dwarf, Cedalion, whom the blind man carried on his shoulders as a guide. He then wandered towards the sunrise and Helios restored his sight. Orion returned to Chios, to take his revenge on Oenopion, but his citizens carried him out of danger and hid him under the earth. There are many stories of Orion's death. He was either killed by Artemis when Eos spirited him away, or he met his death because he assaulted Artemis, or because by his hunting prowess he threatened to destroy all the beasts of the forest. So he still hunts beasts in the underworld with his iron club. According to another version he was translated into the sky as the constellation of Orion where he constantly pursues the Pleiades.

THE TROJAN ROYAL RACE

ATLAS' daughter, Electra, ranks as the ancestress of the Trojan royal house to which belonged Priam, Hector, Paris and Aeneas. In Samothrace she bore Zeus two sons—Dardanus and Iasion. The latter, as we have already met, was the lover of Demeter who was the only man to possess corn to sow after the great flood. But it is also said that he desecrated the image of Demeter and was killed by a thunderbolt from Zeus. Electra's second son wandered into the Troas and founded the city of Dardania at the foot of Mount Ida. At that time Ilium did not exist. His son was Erichthonius, the richest of mortals who possessed 3,000 mares. The wind god, Boreas, served them by changing himself into a stallion, mounting them in turn so that each of the mares gave birth to twelve foals. These horses were

so swift-footed that they could gallop over a field of corn without disturbing a blade, and over the waves on the broad back of the sea. The son of Erichthonius was Tros, after whom the land and its inhabitants were called. He begat three sons—Ilus, Assaracus and Ganymede, the most beautiful youth on earth. But the gods bore him away to Olympus on account of his beauty so that he could serve as a cup bearer to Zeus and live for ever with the gods. The father, however, was filled with sorrow since he did not know where the god of the storm wind had taken his son. Zeus had compassion on the unhappy man and sent him in compensation fast horses such as only the gods could ride. And Hermes brought him the joyous tidings that Ganymede had been given immortality. Zeus is also supposed to have given the father of the ravished boy a golden vine, fashioned by Hephaestus.

Ilus, the second son of Tros, gave his name to the city of Ilium in the Troas. His son was Laomedon. On the orders of Zeus Apollo and Poseidon had to serve Laomedon for a year as punishment because they had rebelled against the father of the gods. They built for him the fortifications of Ilium, and Apollo tended his herds on Ida. At this time a nymph gave her love to Apollo and gave birth to Ileus (or Oeleus) who later was the father of the younger Ajax, the Locrian. But when the gods had completed their year's service the king refused to pay them their wages and threatened to put Apollo in chains and sell him as a slave or to cut off his ears. Both the gods left the land in anger. Aeacus, the son of Zeus, is also reputed to have helped in the building of these walls. As a punishment Poseidon sent a sea monster ashore to kill the inhabitants and destroy the crops. The king then consulted the oracle and was told that he must sacrifice his daughter, Hesione, to the monster. Laomedon obeyed but at the same time announced a prize for the man who would kill the beast—the immortal horses Zeus had presented to his grandfather, Tros. About this time Heracles visited the Troas and promised the king his aid. On the advice of Athena he caused a solid shelter to be built of masonry which would give him purchase, and when the monster approached the hero rushed out, leaped through the dragon's jaws into its belly and killed it from inside. But Laomedon cheated once more by giving the victor

mortal instead of immortal horses. But Heracles spotted the deception, marched against Ilium and destroyed the city, carrying off the immortal horses. Hesione, however, who had been rescued, he presented to his friend, Telamon, who had accompanied him on his expedition and she bore him a son, Teucer.

A son of Laomedon was Tithonus whose fate we have already described. A second son was Priam, the white-haired ruler in Ilium at the time of the Trojan War. He had fifty sons, nineteen of whom had been presented to him by his wife, Hecabe, the daughter of Dymas, who lived on the River Sangarius in Phrygia, and the others were by his concubines.

Priam's eldest son was Hector, the bravest hero among the Trojans. When Hecabe was expecting her second child she had a very significant dream. She dreamed that she had given birth to a burning torch (or a hundred-armed torch-bearing giant) which set the whole of Ilium ablaze. On the advice of a soothsayer her new-born son was left on Mount Ida to die. But a shepherd found the baby, took him into his hut and called him Paris. He, too, became a shepherd and since he guarded the herd bravely against robbers he was also called Alexander, the protector. One day his favourite beast was to be taken to the city to be awarded as a prize in the games which Priam had organized in honour of his son who was believed to be dead. Paris competed in the games unrecognized, and defeated all his brothers. Then Deiphobus, one of Priam's son, annoyed that a helot should take part in the games, threatened him with a sword and Paris fled to the altar of Zeus. Cassandra, however, with her gift of second sight recognized him as her brother, revealed the fact to her father and he was once more received in Troy.

While living as a shepherd on Mount Ida Paris won the love of the nymph, Oenone, and had by her a son, Corythus. It is told that during the war the son later went to the help of the Trojans but fell in love with Helen and was killed by his father.

Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, had been given the gift of prophecy by Apollo when she gave him her love. But once she had obtained this heavenly reward she refused his embraces and Apollo decreed that no one in future should ever believe her

prophecies. Another son of Priam, Helenus, also had the gift of foretelling the future.

The magnificent palace of Priam was built on the citadel of Troy. It contained fifty apartments in which dwelt his fifty sons and their wives and on the other side of the courtyard were the apartments of his daughters who lived there with their husbands. The citadel was crowned by the Temple of Pallas Athene.

Hector, the eldest and bravest of the sons of Priam, won Andromache from Thebes in southern Troad for his wife and brought back his bride with a rich dowry to the city of his father. He despatched the herald, Idæus, ahead of the ship to announce the news. When Priam learnt of this and the rumour ran through the city, the youths harnessed their donkeys and horses to their carts and men, women and children went to meet the couple and escorted him with music and songs to Ilium. The scent of frankincense, myrrh and cinnamon rose from the incense bowls in clouds to the sky. They praised Apollo and asked his blessing on Hector and Andromache.

AENEAS

NEXT to the race of Priam, the ruler of Troy and grandson of Ilus, a second branch of the Dardanean house descended from Assaracus, the brother of Ilus, played a great part. A son of Assaracus was Capys, who in turn was the father of Anchises whom the love of Aphrodite presented with a son, Aeneas. But the Trojan throne did not pass to this branch of the Dardaneans but to the issue of Ilus and thus there was always strife between Aeneas and Priam. And just as Anchises lived far from the city grazing his herds on Mount Ida, his son followed his example and at the beginning of the Trojan War fell foul of Achilles, who had organized a cattle raid, and he was only able to flee by his great turn of speed. After this he took part in the Trojan War as one of the bravest heroes. Aeneas owned two very speedy horses that stemmed from the immortal horses of Tros. His father, Anchises, had purloined the stallions from Laomedon and mated them with his own mares. They bred six foals, two of which he presented to his son.

ANTENOR

ONE of the oldest Trojans during the war was a particular friend of Priam, Antenor, the husband of Theano the priestess of Athene. Shortly after the Greeks had landed in the Troad, Menelaus and Odysseus appeared in the city as envoys to demand the peaceful return of Helen and the stolen treasure. Antenor received them hospitably in his house and protected them when the Trojans tried to kill them. Later, too, when the single combat between Menelaus and Paris was disturbed by the shot of Pandarus and peace was broken by the Trojans, Antenor advised that Helen and the treasure should be returned to the Greeks. As a result, when the city was destroyed his house was spared. Agamemnon had marked it with a leopard's skin, showing that it was to be spared.

Antenor had a great number of sons who distinguished themselves in the battles against the Argives, including Agenor and Achamas, Iphidamas and Cöon. Iphidamas was educated by his grandfather, Cisses, in Thrace and had married the sister of his mother, Theano. He sailed with twelve ships to the aid of the Trojans but was killed in battle by Agamemnon. To avenge him his brother, Cöon, hastened to the scene, wounded Agamemnon but was also slain.

THE TROJAN WAR

THE MARRIAGE OF PELEUS AND THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS

THE earth had now become over-populated and out of compassion Zeus decided to reduce this surplus and start a war in which many men would be killed. As a result of this decision by Zeus the Trojan War broke out.

Thetis, the sea goddess, daughter of Nereus, was loved by Zeus but she refused him for love of Hera who had brought her up as a child. In his anger Zeus decided to marry her to a mortal and thus, against her will, she became the wife of Peleus. But since the father of the gods was also bound in gratitude to the sea goddess for a service she had once rendered him when he was in difficulties, he discussed with her before the marriage the forthcoming war to relieve the earth and its inhabitants and it was agreed that it should only take place after her marriage.

The woman—a daughter of Zeus—over whom the war was to be fought had already been born; the future son of Thetis would become the most famous hero of the war and the daughter of Zeus the most famous woman. So the marriage of the sea goddess to Peleus took place in the cave of the centaur, Chiron, and all the gods attended and brought gifts.

Then Eris, the goddess of quarrels and strife, on the orders of Zeus posed the question who was the most beautiful among the goddesses. She is believed to have thrown a golden apple into the banqueting hall bearing the inscription: 'For the most beautiful'. Three goddesses laid claim to the prize: Hera, Athene and Aphrodite. They were taken by Hermes on the orders of Zeus to Mount Ida in the Troad where Paris, the son of the

Trojan king, Priam, still tended his father's herd. He was to be the judge. In all their beauty and richly adorned with jewels the three goddesses visited the shepherd's hut and each promised him special favours if he chose her as the victor. Hera promised him the rulership of the world, Athene victory in every battle and Aphrodite the most beautiful woman in the world—Helen. Paris declared that Aphrodite was the most beautiful and from that day the two spurned goddesses nursed an implacable hatred against the Trojans.

THE RAPE OF HELEN

IN order to collect his reward, Paris ordered Phereclus, the son of Actor to whom Athene herself had taught his trade, to build the ships which were to cause so much misfortune to Troy and also to the builder himself, for later he fell outside the walls of Troy at the hand of Meriones. Then Paris set sail, although he had been warned against this by the soothsayers. His sister, Cassandra, reminded him of the dream face their mother, Hecabe, had seen before she bore Paris. As her brother sailed away she called upon Apollo.

All knowing thunderer, o Cronus' son
now makest thou our sufferings come true,
foretold when Hecabe still bore this
man within her womb and saw his face in dreams:
a spirit of revenge, a fire-devouring, hundred
handed monster who would with implacable rage
destroy the fair city of Ilium.

Pindar: *Paeon 8*

Nevertheless Paris, accompanied by Aeneas, sailed for Sparta where dwelt Menelaus, the husband of Helen, who had just presented him with a little daughter, Hermione. The Trojans were received and given hospitality by the Dioscuri, the queen's brothers. At this banquet, however, a quarrel broke out between them and the sons of Aphareus. The latter mocked their hosts because they had carried off the daughter of Leucippus without bringing gifts. As a result of this quarrel the Dioscuri fought a battle with the Apharetids from which they never returned. Paris brought Menelaus many costly gifts but when the king

sailed for Crete he realized that his time had come. He fled with Helen to his ship and returned happily with much treasure to Troy.

THE MASSING OF THE GREEKS

WHEN Menelaus, through Iris, the messenger of the gods, heard that his wife had been carried off he sailed home from Crete and discussed with his brother, Agamemnon, how the expedition against Ilium should be conducted. All the Greek princes who had been suitors for Helen's hand had sworn an oath to her father, Tyndareus, to stand by his son-in-law should his honour be threatened. This had now occurred and the heroes were summoned to join the expedition.

Hera, too, full of hatred for the Trojans since she had been scorned by Paris, drove round in her chariot to recruit heroes for the assembly. All the princes declared themselves willing except Odysseus, who had just married Penelope and pretended to be mad when the envoys came to visit him. Then Palamedes, who had been sent to Ithaca, snatched the infant, Telemachus, from its mother's breast and threatened to put it to the sword. Odysseus sprang to protect it, thus betraying he had only feigned madness and was thus forced to join the expedition. From that day he was filled with hatred for Palamedes, who later fell a victim to his weapons before Troy. Another legend has it that Odysseus knew from an oracle that if he took part in the war he would not return home for twenty years, poor and without companions. This is why he pretended to be mad when the envoys arrived. He harnessed an ox and a horse to his plough and sowed salt in the furrows. Palamedes then laid the baby, Telemachus, in the path of the plough and Odysseus carefully drove round the child. Thus his feigned madness became evident.

Menelaus and Agamemnon drove to Pylos, to wise old Nestor, to persuade him to go with them. He received the brothers hospitably and consoled the injured husband by telling him of many unhappy marriages of the past and uttering the wise saw: 'the best gift that the gods have given to man to banish their sorrows is wine'. Despite his great age he agreed to march against Troy, although he had not been one of Helen's suitors and had not participated in the oath.

Nestor went with Odysseus to the court of Peleus at Phthia in Thessaly. There they met Menoetius and his son, Patroclus, who had been brought up with Achilles. The friends joined the expedition and were followed by their old teacher, Phoenix.

In addition to these the following took part in the expedition: Ajax, the son of Telamon who came with twelve ships from Salamis. He was called the Great Ajax to distinguish him from Little Ajax, the son of Oeleus of Locris, and Diomedes, the son of Tydeus. Among the bravest heroes were Idomeneus and Meriones from Crete. As soothsayer to the Achaeans came Calchas, the best augur of bird flight and who now navigated the Greek ships to Ilium by his art of divination, a gift from Apollo. They carried two physicians, Podalirius and Machaon, sons of Asclepius, with contingents from Thessaly. They were very much respected by the Achaeans, for a doctor was considered higher than many men. The island of Cyprus had learned that an expedition was being planned. Here ruled the king and priest of Aphrodite, wealthy Cinyras, the favourite of Apollo, who sent to Agamemnon richly adorned armour as a gift. Cinyras ranked as the father of Adonis whom he had begotten in incest with his own daughter, Myrrha or Smyrna. She had offended Aphrodite and the goddess had filled her with love for her father, and without his recognizing her she lay with him one dark night. When her father realized what had occurred he took his life. The daughter, however, was changed into a tree from whose trunk the beautiful Adonis was born nine months later. He was killed in his youth while hunting a wild boar.

The leader of the Argive host was Agamemnon, the son of Atreus, brother of Menelaus lord of Mycenae, who ruled over a great part of the Peloponnesus. He brought the largest number of ships amounting to one hundred and placed sixty more at the disposal of the inland inhabitants of Arcady. He had inherited the sceptre which Zeus had once presented to Pelops. Menelaus, his brother, led the Spartans.

THE SHIPS SAIL FROM AULIS

THESE and many other heroes assembled with their men in Aulis. Nearly 1,200 ships had collected and as they set sail on



Aphrodite, Rhodes Museum.



Hermes: bronze from Herculaneum. National Museum, Naples.

their common journey a significant omen appeared. While offerings were being made to the gods at a spring a dragon, sent by Zeus himself, crawled from beneath the altar and climbed a plane tree to a sparrow's nest containing the mother and eight young. The dragon ate the chicks and mauled the mother who was changed into a stone by Zeus. All the Greeks saw this miracle and Calchas, the seer, explained the omen. The battle for Troy would last nine years, but in the tenth year the city would be conquered.

The squadron sailed from Aulis across the sea to the coast of Asia Minor with a favourable wind. The crews landed in Teuthrania, south of the Troas and destroyed a city which they mistook for Troy. Telephus, the king of that country and a son of Heracles, hastened to do battle with the Greeks and killed Thersander, son of Polynices. Patroclus was wounded in this battle. But Achilles repulsed the enemy and pursued Telephus until he was hampered in his flight by the intervention of Dionysus. The god caused a vine to sprout in his path, Telephus became entangled and Achilles caught and wounded him in the thigh with his spear.

The Greeks then sailed back home. Achilles came to the Island of Scyros where he married the king's daughter, Deidamia, who later bore him Neoptolemus. But the wounded Telephus sailed to Argus, for he had been told by the oracle: 'The man who wounds you will also heal you.' Seeking sanctuary at an altar he was healed by Achilles, who had been taught the healing arts by Chiron. Others interpreted the oracle in a different way, maintaining that it referred to the spear of Achilles; but rust was scraped off the weapon and laid on the wound of Telephus, who was thereby healed.

Telephus was reputed to be the son of Auge, the daughter of King Aleus of Tegea in Arcady. During Heracles' stay in Tegea she had conceived a child by him, but the king had placed mother and child in a chest and they were cast up on Teuthranian shore.

Now the Greeks assembled for the second time in Aulis. But Agamemnon aroused the ire of Artemis because one day he boasted while out hunting that he was a better shot than the goddess. She prevented the Greeks from sailing by sending

violent storms. Calchas advised Agamemnon to sacrifice his daughter, Iphigenia to the offended goddess. On the pretext that she was to marry Achilles she and her mother, Clytemnestra, were brought to Aulis. But when the virgin stood at the altar Artemis spirited her away to the land of the Taurians on the shores of the Black Sea, and replaced her by a doe which was sacrificed. From that time Clytemnestra nursed a great hatred in her heart for her husband.

THE SECOND VOYAGE AND THE FIRST BATTLES

At last the Greeks sailed with a favourable wind. On the island of Delos they were received hospitably by Anius, the seer and priest of Apollo. Of him and his mother it is told: his mother, Rhoio, was the daughter of Staphylus, a son of Dionysus (or Theseus) and Ariadne. She was loved by Apollo and while expecting a child her father shut her in a chest and let it float out to sea. She was driven ashore in Euboea where she gave birth in a cave to a boy whom she called Anius. Apollo later brought the child to his Delian sanctuary, taught him the art of soothsaying and made him one of his priests. His wife, Dorippe, presented him with three daughters who, as favourites of Dionysus, were called the Oenotropae, for they had been given the gift of producing as much wine, oil and corn as they wished. When the Greeks landed in Delos Anius invited them to stay with him for nine years, for it had been stated by an oracle that Troy would not be destroyed until the tenth year. During that time his daughters would supply them with food by means of their black arts. But the Greeks refused and sailed farther.

They spent some time on the island of Lesbos. Here dwelt the powerful Philomelides, who challenged all strangers to a wrestling match. Odysseus fought and conquered him. Later, when they tried to land on the island of Tenedos the king of that country, Tennes, tried to prevent their landing by hurling boulders of rocks at them. But Achilles slew him, although his mother warned him: 'If you kill Tennes, who is a son of Apollo, you yourself will die by the hand of the god'. The Greeks sacrificed in atonement but a water snake crawled from the altar and bit one of the Achaeans, Philoctetes. Then they sailed away,

but the stench from the wound of the bitten man distressed them so much that they put him ashore on the island of Lemnos. Of Tennes it is related that his stepmother had twice accused him falsely to his father of having tried to rape her, producing a lute player as a witness. The father placed his son in a chest and flung it into the sea; later it was washed up on the shore of Tenedos. Here Tennes became king and called the island after himself.

On landing in the Troad the first to leap ashore was Protesilaus, who was immediately slain by Hector, son of Priam. This Protesilaus was the son of Iphiclus of Phylace in Thessaly, and at the outbreak of the Trojan War had married Laodamia (or Polydora, according to another version). When his wife, whom he had left at home, learnt of her husband's death she made a wax image of him and caressed it as a loving wife. When her father entered the room and saw her embracing the statue he tried to burn it, but she resisted and saved the image. And just as Laodamia transferred her love to this image, Protesilaus, in the underworld was filled with burning passion for his wife and the gods granted his plea that he should return home for a short time. He appeared to her in the guise of a youth who might have just returned from the war. But when their time together was over he told her that he must return to Hades and bade her follow him at all speed. Laodamia took her own life.

In the first battle after the landing, Achilles killed Cycnus, the son of Poseidon. As soon as the dead man had been buried the Greeks sent Odysseus and Menelaus to demand that the Trojans should deliver Helen together with the robbed treasure. When their demands were refused they began to besiege the city—a siege which lasted ten years. Since the city of Troy was not completely enclosed and the Greeks had pitched their camp some distance away on the shore, the Trojans had freedom of movement outside the city. Priam's daughter, Polyxena, accompanied by her young brother, Troilus, ventured forth one evening to fetch water from a well, where Troilus also watered his horse. Achilles lay in wait for them, pursued the pair, killing Troilus. His sister escaped. It is said that Achilles killed the youth by the altar of Apollo and had thus aroused the anger of the god.

Another son of Priam, Lycaon, once met Achilles outside the city when working in his father's orchard by night. He was taken prisoner and sold into slavery on the Island of Lemnos, to Euenus, the son of Jason. After several years he was ransomed and returned to Troy, but on the twelfth day after his return home he fell once more into the hands of Achilles in the battle of the Scamander and was run through with a spear.

THE TROAD

TROY, which the Greeks besieged for ten long years lay at the entrance to the Hellespont, north-west of Mount Ida, some distance from the sea. It was also known as Ilium, the fortified city of Priam. To the west of the Trojan plain flowed the River Scamander, known to the gods as the Xanthus, joined by the Simoeis from the right, both streams with other tributaries springing from the slopes of Mount Ida. The Scamander was not far from the city and fed by a warm and a cold spring. On the Simoeis at the edge of the battlefield rose the Callicolone hill. The city itself was built on the left bank of the Scamander while the battlefield lay on the right bank; at the northern end of the beach the Greeks had pitched their camp. Thus, in order to reach the battlefield the Trojans had to cross the Scamander by a ford. The city itself was so large that it could house all the Trojans and about 50,000 of their allies. It was defended by walls and towers and the heads of defeated foes were impaled on the battlements. From the Scaean Gate, a good view of the battlefield was to be had. Before the gates lay a tall hill known to men as the Baticia and to the gods as the tomb of the nimble Myrine.

THE ANGER OF ACHILLES

THE first nine years of the war were spent in raids carried out by the Greeks in the neighbourhood; rich booty was captured, shared among the princes and used to supply the army. On one of these raids the city of Thebes, which lay near the frontier of the Troad in Mysia, was destroyed. The king of this city was Eëtion, whose daughter, Andromache, was Hector's wife. On the capture of the city Achilles killed the king and seven of his

daughters. Chryseis, the daughter of the priest of Apollo, Chryses, was taken prisoner and given to Agamemnon as his share of the booty. Her father soon appeared in the Achaean camp to ransom his daughter with rich gifts, but with threatening words he was expelled from the camp by Agamemnon. The offended father prayed to his god on the shore:

'Hear me,' he cried, 'O God of the silver bow. . . . Grant my prayer, and let your arrows avenge these my tears upon the Danaans.'

Thus did he pray, and Apollo heard his prayer. He came down furious from the summits of Olympus, with his bow and his quiver upon his shoulder, and the arrows rattled on his back with the rage that trembled within him. He sat himself down away from the ships with a face as dark as night, and his silver bow sang death as he shot his arrows in the midst of them. First he smote their mules and their hounds, but presently he aimed his shafts at the people themselves, and all day long the pyres of the dead were burning.

Iliad, I, 43-52

For nine days the plague raged among the Greeks, and on the tenth day Achilles called for a council of war at which Calchas announced that Apollo was angry because Agamemnon had humiliated his priest. The god would be appeased only if Chryseis were returned to her father without ransom and sacrifices were made in his temple. Infuriated by this Agamemnon demanded reparation for the lost Chryseis and took another girl, Briseis, from the tent of Achilles. This girl had been captured on the fall of Lyrnessus and had been promised to Achilles. Agamemnon now took her. Chryseis was returned to her father and Apollo appeased by sacrifices. Then Achilles called upon his immortal mother, Thetis, to approach Zeus and beg him to accord the victory to the Trojans until Agamemnon recognized the guilt which he had incurred by humiliating the best of the Achaeans. Zeus granted the plea of Achilles which Thetis had laid before him and in his anger the hero boycotted the battle with his Myrmidons.

ZEUS TAKES A HAND

ZEUS pondered how he could honour Achilles and at the same time destroy many of the Achaeans, so he sent the God of Dreams into the Grecian camp. The god, in the guise of Nestor, appeared to Agamemnon by night and ordered him to arm the Achaeans for battle, in the name of Zeus, saying that the city could now be captured. On awakening the prince summoned his leaders, told them of his dream and issued his orders. He would first tempt the men by a promise of their release to go home in their ships. Then the leaders were to meet them and encourage them to stay and then they would all arm for battle. The men were mustered and Agamemnon explained to them that the best thing now would be to return home, since nine years had elapsed and the city had not yet fallen. They all rushed to the ships and would have sailed away had not Hera, noticing this, sent Athene into the Grecian camp to stop the retreat. On her warning Odysseus faced the Greeks, who were about to put to sea, and mustered them once more to a council of war. All of them obeyed with the exception of Thersites, the ugliest of the Achaeans who began to abuse Agamemnon and was chastised by Odysseus to the general applause. At the council of war the Greeks were made to change their minds by Agamemnon and Nestor. They feasted together and then hopefully armed themselves for the battle.

But the Trojans also received a message from the gods, brought by Iris in the guise of a Trojan. They must prepare for battle against the Greeks. The Trojans and their allies, therefore, armed, and auxiliaries appeared from the surrounding country—even from the farthest parts of Asia Minor and Thrace—led by well-known heroes such as the leader of the Dardanians, Anchises and Aeneas, the son of Aphrodite, the archer Pandarus, the leader of the Ciconians Euphemus of Thrace, Sarpedon and Glaucus from Lycia and many others.

THE TROJAN VICTORIES

THE two armies went into battle. Paris leapt from the ranks of the Trojans and challenged the bravest of the Greeks to single

combat. But when Menelaus accepted his challenge he displayed cowardice and was soundly rated by his brother, Hector. Thus constrained, he once more issued a challenge and a pact was solemnly sworn. The winner should keep Helen as his own, together with her treasure. Menelaus would have defeated and slain his enemy had not Aphrodite spirited her protégé from the battlefield. As the victor Menelaus now demanded the fruits of his victory and the war would have been ended. But Zeus had promised satisfaction to Achilles and so the gods took a hand so that the pact was broken. Athene, in the guise of a Trojan, challenged Pandarus to shoot Menelaus with his bow and arrow. The Greek leader was slightly wounded and the Trojan army advanced and a great battle developed in which Diomedes particularly distinguished himself. He wreaked havoc among the enemy and wounded Aeneas, but his mother, Aphrodite, bore him off the battlefield. Then Diomedes attacked the goddess herself, spear in hand, so that she had to abandon her son and Iris brought her to Olympus in the chariot of Ares. Apollo hurried to the aid of Aeneas, repelled the attacking hero with threatening words and brought the wounded man to Troy where his wounds were healed by Leto and Artemis. At the same time Apollo called upon Ares to halt the violent onslaught of Diomedes, but with the aid of Athene he even wounded the God of War so that he repaired to Olympus roaring with pain.

The fortunes of battle ebbed and flowed. But then the Greeks, on the advice of Nestor, the better to protect themselves against the onslaught of the Trojans, built a wall with strong towers, gates and a moat round their camp. With the connivance of Zeus the Trojans were victorious and pitched their camps outside the walls of the city in the hope of being able to storm the Grecian camp, and the enemy retired within their walls.

At a council of war, Agamemnon proposed that they should break off the siege and return home, but Diomedes complained and, on the advice of Nestor, Agamemnon finally agreed to placate the offended Achilles by rich gifts so that he would take part once more in the battle. Ajax, Odysseus and Phoenix were sent to the tent of Achilles to bring about a reconciliation. But Achilles rejected Agamemnon's proposal and not even his old

teacher, Phoenix, could pacify him. He would return to the battle only if Hector actually threatened the ships of his Myrmidons.

A night reconnaissance made by Diomedes and Odysseus led to the violent death of a Trojan ally, the Thracian prince, Rhesus. But the Trojans remained victorious. Countless heroes fell on both sides and the bravest of the Greeks were wounded—Agamemnon, Odysseus, Diomedes, and the ruler of Ormenion, Eurypylus. The Trojans succeeded in breaching the fortifications and reaching the ships. In this great peril the weeping Patroclus approached his friend and at his request Achilles allowed him to hurry to the aid of the Greeks armed with his own immortal weapons and with a contingent of Myrmidons. He was ordered to drive the Trojans from the camp and then to return to him.

THE DEATH OF PATROCLUS

HECTOR had already flung a firebrand into one of the ships. Achilles then told his friend to hurry and as Patroclus rushed past wearing Achilles' armour the Trojans believed that the son of Peleus had returned to the fray and fled over the trenches into the open country. Forgetful of his friend's orders, Patroclus, in his lust for battle, was carried along far on to the battlefield in pursuit of the enemy. He slew many of the Trojans, including their ally, the Lycian prince, Sarpedon, a son of Zeus, and assaulted the walls of the city. But then he was repulsed by Apollo and driven back. Hector attacked Patroclus. Reeling from the god's blow and wounded by the spear of Euphorbus, he was killed by Hector. Now a violent battle flared up round the corpse. Menelaus, Ajax the Telamonian and the Cretan, Meriones, were well to the fore but Hector managed to capture the dead man's weapons. While the battle still raged Achilles received news of his friend's death through Antilochus, Nestor's son. His mother, Thetis, in the depths of the sea heard his complaint and appeared on the shore by the Achaean camp with her sisters, the Nereids, and their wailing was mingled with that of her son. Achilles, however, thought only of revenging his friend; this he would do even though fate had decreed that he himself would die shortly afterwards. Thetis promised to bring

him new weapons forged by Hephaestus and hurried to Olympus where the blacksmith god forged them at her request.

But while the battle still raged round the corpse Achilles, challenged by Iris on the command of Zeus, approached the walls of the camp. Athene threw the Aegis round his shoulders and so, ringed with fire, he stood there and roared over the battlefield until the Trojans fled in terror and the corpse of his friend could be brought back to the Grecian camp.

HECTOR'S DEATH

THE following day Thetis gave her son the new weapons which Hephaestus had forged. With the death of Patroclus, Achilles' anger with Agamemnon vanished and he thought only of taking his revenge on Hector. He was reconciled with the Atrides, receiving their gifts, including the maiden, Briseis, and girded himself for battle. The gods with the consent of Zeus took part once more in the contest—Hera, Athene, Poseidon, Hermes and Hephaestus on the side of the Greeks; Ares, Apollo, Artemis, Leto, Aphrodite and the river god, Scamander, on the side of the Trojans.

'... Such was the turmoil as the battle of the gods began. And little wonder, when the Lord Poseidon was faced by Phoebus Apollo with his winged Arrows, and Athene of the Flashing Eyes by Ares; when Hera was confronted by Apollo's Sister, Artemis of the Golden Distaff, the Archeress and goddess of the chase; Leto by the formidable Hermes, Bringer of Luck; and Hephaestus by the mighty swirling River who is called Xanthus by the gods and Scamander by mankind.

'Thus they went to war, god against god.' *Iliad*

Many Trojans were killed by Achilles in this bloodthirsty battle of revenge. He attacked Aeneas, son of Anchises and Aphrodite, but after a bitter contest Poseidon separated them; causing a great mist to appear before the eyes of Achilles he took Aeneas and hurled him far from the fray. Fate had decreed that he and his issue should rule over the Trojans on the death of Priam. When Achilles killed Priam's youngest son, Polydorus, with his spear Hector saw it, rushed up and hurled a lance at

his foe, but Athene breathed and diverted the blow and Apollo withdrew his protégé from the attack of Peleus' son, who continued to wreak havoc among the Trojan warriors. Then Priam opened the city gates to receive the fleeing Trojans while Apollo in the guise of the Trojan, Agenor, fled before Achilles, luring him away from the gate. When the hero spotted the deceit he returned to the city gate where Hector was waiting outside alone for his opponent. In vain his parents on the wall implored him to break off the contest and when Achilles, the personification of the war god himself, rushed forward the Trojan's courage failed and he turned to flee. Achilles pursued him three times around the walls of the city. The gods looked on at this awesome spectacle until Zeus himself had pity and wanted to rescue the hunted man, but he bowed to the words of Athene and left her a free hand. She approached Achilles and barred his passage. He should stand firm and fight. The shrew encouraged Hector in the guise of Deiphobus, his brother. They would fight Achilles together. When Hector approached Achilles flung his lance. The Trojan ducked and the shot fell into the ground, but Athene retrieved it and handed it back to the son of Peleus. Hector's spear rebounded harmlessly against the breastplate of his foe and as he looked around to seize a second lance from his brother, he perceived that he was no longer there and recognized the wiles of Athene. Achilles now pierced Hector's throat with his lance. As he lay dying he begged that his corpse should be returned to his parents against a ransom, but the ruthless Achilles replied: 'You cur, don't talk to me of knees or name my parents in your prayers. I only wish that I could summon up the appetite to carve and eat you raw myself, for what you have done to me.'

And he added that he would give his corpse to the dogs and the birds to be devoured. Thereupon he pierced the feet of the fallen man, bound him to his chariot and dragged him to the ships. The dead man's aged parents saw this from the walls of the city and their lamentations filled the air. Andromache alone had not yet heard of her husband's death. She was in her apartments sewing and had prepared a bath for when he should return from the heat of battle. As soon as she heard the wailing she

hurried to the tower and saw Hector's corpse being dragged to the ships and began to wail in company with her women.

THE FUNERAL FEAST OF PATROCLUS

THE shade of Patroclus appeared in the night to Achilles reproaching him and demanding immediate burial so that he could enter Hades. In the future the ashes of the two friends were to be placed in one single urn. Thus on the following day the corpse was burnt on a pyre together with sheep and cattle, two of the dead man's hounds and twelve noble Trojans whom Achilles had just captured and slain in honour of Patroclus. But Hector's corpse was not to be consigned to the flames but given to the dogs to eat. Aphrodite, however, anointed Hector's corpse with ambrosia and Apollo spread a dark cloud around it so that the heat of the sun should not make it decay. Next morning when the fires of the funeral pyre had died down, the ashes were placed in a golden urn and buried in a tomb. Achilles then organized games in honour of his friend. In the chariot race Diomedes, son of Tydeus, was the victor, Epeius, son of Panopeus, won the boxing, the wrestling was a draw between Odysseus and Ajax, the Telamonian. In the foot-race Odysseus was first at the finish and in the armed combat Ajax and Diomedes shared the prizes. Polypoites won the discus-throwing, the Cretan Meriones won the archery contest and the prize for throwing the spear was awarded to Agamemnon.

HECTOR'S REDEMPTION

ACHILLES dragged the corpse of Hector bound to his chariot round the tomb of his friend and the gods were filled with compassion. Hera, Athene and Poseidon alone, in their hatred of Troy, remained unmoved. Then Zeus summoned Thetis from the depths of the sea to Olympus and told her to ask her son to return the corpse in return for a ransom. And he told Iris to inform the king of the Trojans that he should visit the Grecian camp with an escort of immortals to redeem his son's body. Priam donned his armour and on the way Hermes joined him in the guise of a youth and led him safely through the outer

fortifications to the tent of Achilles. Obeying the will of Zeus he received the old man cordially and returned him the corpse of his son and then Hermes led him back to the city. Now the funeral games in honour of Hector began and the battle raged once more around the city.

PENTHESILEA, MEMNON, THE DEATH OF ACHILLES

IN their distress the Trojans received fresh help from the Amazon queen, Penthesilea and the Aethiopian prince, Memnon. Penthesilea, a daughter of Ares, was slain in battle by Achilles, but moved by her beauty he delivered her corpse to the Trojans for burial. When the vituperative Thersites accused him of falling in love with the Amazon, he gave him a blow with the fist from which he died. But by this murder Achilles had sullied his honour and he had to journey to Lesbos to sacrifice to Apollo, Artemis and Leto.

Memnon, like Achilles, was of divine origin, a son of Eos and Tithonus, Priam's brother. Like Achilles he, too, wore weapons forged by Hephaestus. In battle he killed Antilochus, the son of Nestor, and friend of Achilles. After this the two men met in single combat. Their immortal mothers, Thetis and Eos, each pleaded with Zeus for the life and victory of her own son. Zeus weighed their fate in the scales: Memnon's sank and he fell in battle. Eos bore his corpse from the battlefield for burial; his shade became immortal.

After Achilles had killed Memnon he pursued the Trojans to the city walls, but when he tried to enter the city gate he was killed by an arrow from Paris' bow, guided by Apollo. Bitter fighting broke out round the corpse of the fallen hero in which Ajax, the Telamonian, distinguished himself, continuing to bring it to safety with the help of Odysseus.

Thetis, the mother of Achilles, knew that her son would fall before Troy and had herself prophesied his fate. When she now learnt of her son's death she rose with her sisters out of the sea, wrapped the corpse in fine linen and began to lament with the Muses. Then the body was burnt and the ashes placed in a golden urn, the work of Hephaestus, together with the remains of Patroclus and of Antilochus, the son of Nestor, and buried in a

large tomb. The immortal part of her son, however, Thetis carried off to the Island of Leuce, the abode of the Blessed.

THE QUARRELS FOR THE WEAPONS OF ACHILLES

AT the funeral games in honour of Achilles the hero's weapons were to be awarded to the bravest of the Greeks, and both Ajax and Odysseus competed. In this contest the Achaean princes decided for Odysseus. It is also said that on the advice of Nestor, the Greeks sent spies in secret to the walls of Troy to listen to the conversation of the Trojan maidens. They were discussing the bravery of the Greek heroes, and while one championed Ajax who had carried the dead Achilles off the battlefield, the other, coached by Athene, the patron goddess of Odysseus, replied that a woman, too, could carry a burden when a man laid it upon her but she could not fight. Odysseus was, therefore, proclaimed victor in this contest.

THE DEATH OF THE GREAT AJAX

THE Telamonian determined to take his revenge for this slight. He decided to murder Odysseus and the two sons of Atreus in their tents by night. But Athene sent him mad and he fell upon a herd of sheep, mistaking them for Achaeans, killing many of the beasts. A ram, whom he mistook for his arch-enemy Odysseus, he carried into his tent and whipped.

When he recovered from his temporary madness and, in his terror, realized the enormity of his deeds, he committed suicide by falling on his sword.

PHILOCTETES

SOON after this Odysseus captured the Trojan soothsayer, Helenus, who prophesied to the Greeks that they would never capture Troy without the bow of Heracles. This bow, however, was now in the possession of Philoctetes whom the Greeks had left behind sick on the Island of Lemnos. So Odysseus and Diomedes were sent to fetch the hero who had been bitten by a snake and Philoctetes arrived with his weapons at the Greek camp and was healed by Machaon. Then in single combat with

Paris he managed to slay with an arrow the man who had caused the war.

NEOPTOLEMUS AND EURYPYLUS

BUT Neoptolemus, too, whom Achilles had begotten during his stay on the Island of Skyros, was to be brought to Troy on the grounds of an oracle in order that the city might be taken. Odysseus also fetched him and at the same time presented the youth with his father's golden armour. And Menelaus promised him on his return home one of his daughters, Hermione, for wife.

The Trojans at this time acquired a new ally—Eurypylus, son of Telephus and Astyoche, a sister of Priam, King of the Mysians and, according to Odysseus, the most handsome man he had ever seen after Memnon. Legend says that Eurypylus, as the heir of Telephus, should not have come to the aid of the Trojans since his father when healed of his wound by Achilles had promised that no member of his race would give his support to the Trojans. But Priam had sent to Eurypylus' mother the golden vine which Zeus had once given the Trojan king when he carried off Ganymede and Astyoche, therefore, allowed her son to leave for Troy. Here he accomplished many heroic feats, killing the Greek physician, Machaon, son of Asclepius, in battle only to fall by the hand of Neoptolemus.

THE PALLADIUM

HELENUS had also told the Greeks that they must procure the Palladium, a wooden figure of Athene, upon the possession of which the safety of Ilium depended. There are various versions as to how this sacred image fell into the hands of the Greeks. According to one tradition the Palladium had been a present from Zeus to the Trojan king, Dardanus. This costly image was preserved in the inner shrine of Athene, while a copy was displayed to the public in the outer temple. The Greeks stole this copy during the siege and when the city was conquered the younger Ajax, son of Oeleus, rushed into the shrine of Athene where, guarding the Palladium, he met Cassandra, the daughter of Priam. He carried off both the prophetess and the image. Thus

the true Palladium fell into the hands of the Greeks. But to punish his sacrilege in robbing a holy shrine they wanted to stone Ajax. He fled for sanctuary to the altar of Athene and thus saved his life, but after this the goddess spurned the Greek heroes.

There is, however, another version. After the prophecy of Helenus concerning the Trojan Palladium Odysseus, on being healed of his wound by Thoas, the son of Andraemon, stole into the city as a spy disguised as a beggar. Here he talked to Helen who recognized him, and they plotted together the capture of the city. After killing a few Trojans he returned to the Greek ships and undertook to steal the image with the help of Diomedes. The two heroes entered the city through a subterranean passage, took possession of the image which Diomedes bore away while Odysseus covered his retreat. To prevent his companion gaining all the credit of bringing the Palladium to the Greeks Odysseus drew his sword to stab Diomedes in the back. But the latter saw his intention in the bright moonlight, seized and bound Odysseus by the wrists and drove him back to the ships. In this way the true image fell into the hands of the Greeks.

THE FALL OF TROY

WHEN the Achaeans found that they could not take the city by assault they resorted to a ruse. On the advice of Athene the carpenter, Epeius, built a huge wooden horse with a hollow belly large enough to conceal a number of armed men. The bravest of the Greek heroes hid inside the horse while the remainder put to sea and sailed to the nearby Island of Tenedos after striking camp. They left behind one man, Sinon, as a sentry on the river bank who was to give them later the signal to return with a torch.

When the Greeks had left, the Trojans streamed out of the city next morning, delighted that the enemy had gone. They stared in amazement at the gigantic wooden horse but were in doubt as to what to do with it. Some wanted to roll it down a slope, others to burn it, while others again suggested that it should be offered as a sacrifice to Athene. The advice of the latter finally prevailed. But the horse was too tall to enter through the city gates so a part of the wall had to be torn down. It was then dragged on rollers up to the citadel. A great feast began and even

the warnings of the prophetess, Cassandra, could not damp their spirits. Then Helen, possessed of a demon, brought the heroes inside the horse into great danger: accompanied by Deiphobus, her new husband, she went over to the horse, walked round it three times, knocked on its belly and called the Greek heroes by name so that each man inside believed that it was his wife calling. All of them wished to reply but Odysseus forcibly silenced them, thus rescuing his comrades in their hiding place. Another warning appeared to the Trojans. Two snakes crawled ashore and killed Laocöon and his two sons. But all these omens were in vain. The Trojans gave themselves over to their carousing, eating and drinking, and that night Sinon gave the agreed signal to the Greeks off-shore. They sailed in from Tenedos and the heroes hidden in the wooden horse came out of their hiding place with the aid of ladders and ropes. It was midnight and a full moon. Then a great slaughter began among the drunken and sleeping Trojans. Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, in particular butchered the enemy, killing the aged Priam by the altar of Zeus. His small grandson, Astyanax, son of Hector, was flung from the battlements either by Odysseus or Neoptolemus.

During this slaughter Menelaus entered the palace in search of Helen. After the death of Paris she had married his brother, Deiphobus. When Menelaus found the couple he killed the Trojan and took Helen back to the ship and was reconciled to her because of her amazing beauty. As soon as all the Trojans had been slain, the city was burnt, the walls destroyed and the rich booty distributed.

THE FATE OF THE TROJAN WOMEN

IN the middle of the fifth century, B.C., the painter, Polygnotus, painted the destruction of Troy and the departure of the Greeks in a hall at Delphi. On this fresco could be seen the younger Ajax and Cassandra, Neoptolemus still wreaking havoc among the Trojans, dead Priam and the house of Antenor, which the Greeks spared; Antenor himself with a donkey bearing his household goods ready to leave the city; the carpenter, Epeius, who had destroyed the city wall and his masterpiece, the wooden horse; the captured Trojan women; Menelaus and Nestor, Helen



Odysseus bound to the mast of his ship; an amphora in the British Museum.



Above: The Chimaera: Etruscan bronze. Archaeological Museum, Florence. *Below:* Ajax and Achilles playing draughts. Vatican Museum.



and Aethra, accompanying her grandson. And in the orchestra at Athens people could see pictures of the tragedy as depicted by the tragic poets. In the year 415 during the Peloponnesian war, the Athenians saw the fate of the captured Trojan women on the stage. Ilium was taken and the destruction of the city was imminent. Even the gods had left the abandoned city. Poseidon bewailed the fate of Troy, whose walls he and Apollo had built. Athene, who had been on the side of the Greeks during the ten-year war, had turned away from them because of the sacrilege committed by Ajax the Locrian, who had ravished Cassandra and taken the sacred image from the altar. She now planned to ruin the Greeks on their homeward journey and to this end begged the aid of Poseidon. Hecabe, the aged widow of Priam, whose husband had also been killed, received one evil tidings after the other from the Spartan herald, Talthylbius. She learned that the Greeks had distributed the booty; Cassandra had been given to Agamemnon as concubine; Andromache had been promised to Neoptolemus and she herself was to be Odysseus' slave. She heard that her daughter, Polyxena, had been sacrificed on the tomb of Achilles; that her grandson, Astyanax, had been hurled from the battlements on the advice of Odysseus. But she also saw with satisfaction that Menelaus intended to take Helen back as a prisoner to Sparta, where she was to be hanged for her infidelity. Then, the body of her grandson, Astyanax, was brought in on Hector's shield and it was announced that Neoptolemus was taking Andromache, Hector's wife, with him on his homeward voyage. And while Hecabe herself was carried off to the hated Odysseus, the signal was given to consign Troy to the flames.

In the 'Hecabe' of Euripides we learn how the last sibling of the race of Priam, the son of Hecabe—Polydorus—met his death. His father had sent him with great treasure to Polymestor, the king of the Thracians, believing that he would be safe there. But the king slew him and took possession of his wealth. From a maid-servant who had found the corpse of Polydorus on the beach his mother learnt of the death of her last son. But Polyxena, too, was torn from her arms and carried off by Odysseus to be sacrificed on the tomb of Achilles. Now Hecabe would at least take revenge on the faithless Thracian, Polymestor. With the consent

of Agamemnon she lured him into the Grecian camp and managed to kill his two sons and to blind him. Her own death had been foretold. She would be turned into a fiery-eyed bitch and buried in the Thracian Chersonnesus at a place which has since been known as Cynossema, the tomb of the Dog.

AETHRA

ON the fall of Troy another Grecian woman, who had been acting as a maidservant at the Trojan court, was discovered—Aethra, mother of the Attic king, Theseus. She had come from Attica with Helen to Sparta when the Dioscuri rescued their sister who had been carried off by Theseus. She had then accompanied Helen as a maidservant to Troy. Now her grandsons, Demophon and Acamas found and freed her.

ANTENOR AND AENEAS

A FEW of the Trojan heroes survived the destruction of their city. Antenor left Troy with his sons and with them the Enetians from Paphlagonia who had come to the aid of the Trojans and after the death of their prince, Pylaemenes, were without a leader. They settled in Italy on the Po and called their country Venetian land. It is also related that the Antenorides left the ravished city with Menelaus and Helen, and settled at Cyrene in North Africa. Antenor, it will be remembered, had once given Menelaus hospitality in Troy.

Of Aeneas we know that shortly before the capture of Troy, warned by the misfortune which befell Laocöon, he left the city carrying his father, Anchises, on his shoulders and went into hiding with a few of his companions on Mount Ida. His race ruled there after the Greeks had left the Troad. According to others, he left with his father, his son, Ascanius, and a few other survivors for the west, reached Sicily and Italy where he founded the city of Latium which he called Rome after a Trojan woman. Here, too, came Latinus, the son of Odysseus and Circe, and the race of the Latins are presumed to have originated from him.

THE ACHAEAN WALLS

WHEN the Achaeans in the tenth year of the siege built a wall round their camp to protect their ships, they forgot to sacrifice to the gods. This aroused the anger of the immortals and in particular of Poseidon, who immediately expressed his fear on the erection of these fortifications, that the fame of this work would spread through the land while the walls which he and Apollo had built for Troy would be forgotten. Then Zeus promised him that on the departure of the Greeks this fortification would be razed from the earth. Now that the Greeks had left, the Achaean walls which had been built against the will of the gods were destroyed by Apollo and Poseidon. Apollo led the waters of all the streams that poured down from Mount Ida to flood the hated walls. Zeus allowed rain to fall uninterrupted for nine days, and Poseidon hastened the destruction with his trident, and soon the whole area was once more covered with sand.

THE HEROES RETURN HOME

STRIFE AMONG THE ATRIDS

AFTER the destruction of the city the Greeks prepared to return home. Of their great heroes the following had found their graves before Troy—Achilles, Patroclus, Antilochus son of Nestor, Ajax the Telamonian, Protesilaus, Tlepolemus the son of Heracles, the physician, Machaon, son of Asclepius, Medon, the son of Aeolus, the half-brother of the younger Ajax, two leaders of the Epeians, Amphimachus and Diores. But the homeward bound survivors were menaced by the anger of Athena, who was still bitter because of the sacrilege committed by the younger Ajax. Strife broke out among the Atrids. They called a council of war and uttered their opinion before their wine-besotted comrades. Menelaus wanted to start for home at once, but Agamemnon wished first to appease Athene by sacrifices. Part of the Greeks set out with Menelaus the following day. Their first port of call was Tenedos, where they sacrificed to the gods. Odysseus returned to Agamemnon in Troy, but Menelaus, Nestor and Diomedes sailed to Lesbos where they discussed the future journey. Here Zeus gave them a sign indicating their route across the sea to the Island of Euboea. There, on the southern promontory of the island, they sacrificed to Poseidon, and thus Diomedes reached Argos safely and Nestor came to Pylus. Philoctetes and Idomeneus also arrived home safely.

THE WANDERINGS OF MENELAUS

MENELAUS, who set out with Nestor, lost his helmsman, Phrontis, off Cape Sunium and buried him there. On the next

stage of his journey the ships were caught in a terrible storm which drove them to Crete where all, with the exception of five, were wrecked. The remainder drifted towards Egypt and now began a seven years wandering which led them to Cyprus, Phoenicia and Aethiopia. During the voyage Menelaus amassed great wealth and both he and Helen received many costly gifts. They took from Egypt many magic herbs, native to the country, which when mixed with wine relieved all pain and sorrow. Polydamne, the wife of King Thon, gave them to Helen.

When they finally tried to leave Egypt they were held up by contrary winds for twenty days on the Island of Pharos, because they had not sacrificed sufficiently lavishly to the gods. Now they ran short of supplies and had to live on the fish they caught with lines. Menelaus then met a goddess, Eidothea, daughter of the sea god, Proteus, who gave him good advice. Her father was Proteus, a servant of Poseidon, and if they could capture him by cunning, the prophetic sea god would tell them everything they wanted to know. She also told him how her father could be compelled to speak. Menelaus followed her advice. Next morning, taking three of his most capable men, they wrapped themselves in the skin of a newly killed seal, given them by Eidothea, and played on the sand by the seashore. Naturally, the appalling stench of the sealskin was an ordeal but the goddess annointed their nostrils with ambrosia, the pleasant odour of which banished the stench of the rancid hide. Gradually the seals appeared from the sea and lay down in rows next to each other, and at noon Proteus came to count his herds. When he lay down among them to take his rest, Menelaus and his men captured the god. He immediately changed himself into a lion, then into a snake, a panther and a boar, suddenly melting into water or turning into a tree. Finally he admitted defeat and answered the questions posed by Menelaus. He must first return to the River Aegyptus and sacrifice to Zeus and to the other gods. Proteus also told him of the fate of many of his war comrades—of Ajax the Locrian, of Agamemnon, who was already dead, and of Odysseus whom the nymph, Calypso, held in thrall on her island. He also foretold the fate of Menelaus:

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'But you the everlasting gods shall send
To the Elysian plain at the world's end,
Where fair-haired Rhadamanthys dwells, and where
Life is for men most pleasant: there descend

No violent tempests, neither rain nor snow,
But shrill from ocean western breezes blow
Ever to cool men's drought; since you for wife
Have Helen, and are kin to godhead so.'

Odyssey, IV, 80-90

After uttering these words the sea god plunged beneath the waves. Menelaus sacrificed on the River Aegyptus, raised a memorial to his brother, Agamemnon, and then returned home to Sparta with his five remaining ships eight years after the fall of Troy.

It is related that King Thon of Egypt, whose wife, Polydamne, had given Helen the magic herbs, fell in love and raped Helen as soon as he saw her, and Menelaus killed him.

PALINODE TO HELEN

SOME maintain that Helen started all the trouble and followed her seducer to Troy. 'This is not true; never, Helen, did you board the swift ship nor did you come to the citadel of Troy,' sings the poet, Stesichorus. It is maintained that Helen retired to a far-off land and Paris only brought an image of her home and that after the war Helen returned to her husband.

And then we have the convincing tale that Hera, furious at the judgment of Paris, created an image of Helen which the Trojan prince carried off while Hermes, at the behest of Zeus, brought the true Helen to Proteus, king of Egypt, under whose protection she now lived. But after his death his son, Theoclymenus, desired her and she took refuge in the tomb of the dead king. Teucer, seven years after the destruction of Troy, was thrown up on this shore. He had been banished from Salamis by his father, Telamon, since he had returned alone from Troy without his brother, Ajax. Helen learnt from him that Menelaus, with his newly won wife, had left Troy but had disappeared at sea in a great storm.

Now she turned to Theonoë, the prophetess daughter of Proteus, to learn more details about her husband, and was told that Menelaus was still alive and would soon be home. Shortly after this Menelaus was shipwrecked and cast up on the beach. He met Helen, but she could not admit to being his wife because he thought that he had brought his re-won wife from Troy. Then he was told that the Helen he had brought back from Troy had been translated to the sky because Paris had never possessed the true Helen. Menelaus was now convinced that he had found his true wife once more in Egypt; he succeeded in outwitting the barbarian, Theoclymenus, stealing a ship in which they escaped and returned to Sparta. Before they arrived, however, Helen's brothers, the Dioscuri, descended from the sky and announced that their sister would also be translated to Olympus after her death and that Menelaus was also destined to dwell in the Islands of the Blest.

THE ACCOUNT OF THE EGYPTIAN PRIESTS

THE Egyptian priests gave another account of the events that transpired in their land. In those days Proteus was king in Memphis, and when Paris sailed from Sparta with Helen they met a storm which drove them on to the western arm of the Nile where stood a shrine of Heracles. There the shipwrecked crew found asylum, but when the priest heard of the Trojan's sacrilege he sent Thoris, the ruler of this province, with a message to Proteus asking what was to be done with this stranger who had so disgracefully abused the rules of hospitality in Greece. Proteus gave his decision and ordered that Helen, her companion and the pillaged treasure should be brought to Memphis where they were to stand trial. Paris denied the deed, but was betrayed by the others and Proteus decreed that the scoundrel and his companions should leave the land within three days. He would retain the woman and the treasure until the rightful owner came to fetch them. Menelaus now embarked on his expedition with the other Greeks against Troy. Soon after his arrival he sent an envoy demanding the return of Helen, but the Trojans lied, saying that she was not in Ilium but in Egypt. The Greeks refused to believe them, however, besieged the city and eventually captured it.

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Only then, when they did not find Helen, were they convinced of the truth of the Trojan assurance and Menelaus travelled to Egypt to see Proteus and was given back his wife and all his treasure. But then Menelaus committed an evil deed. Being held up by a contrary wind he seized two children of Egyptian noble birth and sacrificed them. When his deed was known he fled to Libya, cursing Egypt. What happened to him later the Egyptians were not in a position to say.

But the Greek who heard this story in Egypt put his own interpretation on it. At Memphis, in the sacred precincts dedicated to Proteus, he also saw a shrine dedicated to the 'foreign Aphrodite' and he believed that this goddess was Helen, the daughter of Tyndareus, who had lived for a long time with Proteus. Homer also betrays that he knew of this story even though he did not mention it because it did not suit his text. He does, however, allow Paris to visit Sidon in Syria, which is on the borders of Egypt (*Iliad* VI. 289) and in the *Odyssey* (IV. 227) he mentioned the magic herbs which Helen received from Polydamne, the wife of Thon, and in another passage (IV. 351) Menelaus' stay in Egypt. Naturally, the *Cypria* could not have been written by Homer for this epic says that Paris came to Ilium on the third day after leaving Sparta with Helen. As regards the Egyptian account, the Greek considered that had Helen really been in Troy the Trojans, with or without the consent of Paris, would have returned her to the Greeks. For neither Priam nor any of the royal house were mad enough to endanger their city so that Paris could remain with Helen. At least after the first losses of the war, when several sons of the king had already fallen, Priam—even had he been Helen's lover—would have delivered her to the Achaeans to avert the danger. Nor was it Paris but Hector who was eldest son and heir of Priam. So we come to the conclusion that in actual fact Helen never was in Troy, and that the Greeks unjustly disbelieved the statement of the Trojans. The gods had decided, by the great misfortune which overtook the city, to reveal to man that a great crime would be severely punished by them.

The Greek could, therefore, accept what he had heard from Persian scholars: 'It is futile,' they said, 'to get excited about ravished women, for had they not wished to be raped they would

not have been.' Only the Greeks lost their head on account of a woman carried off from Sparta and launched a full-scale war. This was the initial cause of the hostility between Asia and Europe.

THE RETURN OF AGAMEMNON

AGAMEMNON left Troy after sacrificing to the offended Athene, but he was unable to pacify her. The shade of Achilles appeared to him, warned him not to set out on the journey and foretold that a grim fate awaited him. Agamemnon took no heed of this warning and set out for home with many other heroes. Off the southern promontory of Euboea they ran into a violent storm. Many of the ships were lost with all hands. Ajax, the son of Oeleus, sank beneath the waves but Poseidon tried to rescue him and drove him ashore on the rocks:

'Aias with all his long-oared ships was lost,
Whom first Poseidon on a rock-bound coast
At Gyrae drove, but saved him from the sea:
And there, but for the overweening boast

He uttered from a heart infatuate,
He had not perished, though Athena's hate
Pursued him: for he vaunted to have won
Through the great sea-gulf in despite of fate.

But that high speech Poseidon heard, and he
Took in his mighty hands immediately
His trident, and the rock of Gyrae smote
In sunder where it overhung the sea:

And half remained in place, but half he flung
Into the deep, the crag where Aias clung
When he into that great transgression fell;
And him it bore the waste of waves among.

Thus the salt water there he drank and died.'

Several more heroes fell victim to the revenge of Nauplius. As we know he was the son of Poseidon by the daughter of Danaus, Amynone, and he himself was the father of Palamedes who bore a grudge against the Greeks because of the death of his son. Palamedes, at the assembly of the heroes who set out to Troy, had unmasked the feigned madness of Odysseus and the latter had sworn to take his revenge. Thus later, off Troy, in conspiracy with Diomedes, he had drowned him while they were out fishing. According to another version he accused him falsely of betraying the Greeks and he was stoned to death. Nauplius had learnt of this and the opportunity now came for him to take his revenge. He lit beacons on the rocks of southern Euboea, making the Greeks believe that they had been lit by their comrades and that they would find a bay where they could land. But in the storm they were smashed to pieces against the cliffs.

Agamemnon escaped this danger but when he reached home misfortune overtook him. His wife, Clytemnestra, during his ten-year absence, had after long resistance succumbed to the seductions of Aegisthus. Before leaving for Troy Agamemnon had left a minstrel to keep an eye on his wife, but Aegisthus banished him to a rocky cliff. The seducer himself had posted a guard to announce the arrival of the king. When he learned of Agamemnon's approach he drove out in his chariot to meet him and invited him to a banquet. But in the hall he had concealed twenty armed men who fell upon the king during the meal and killed him and his companions like so many cattle being slaughtered in a stable. Aegisthus committed this bloody crime, although Zeus had sent him a warning through Hermes. Cassandra was also slain by Clytemnestra. Aegisthus ruled for seven years in Mycenae until Agamemnon's son, Orestes, came from Athens where he had been brought up and killed his father's murderer and his mother.

Clytemnestra participated in the murder of her husband. Had the death of her daughter, Iphigenia, in far off Aulis aroused Clytemnestra's hatred for her husband or had lust enticed her into a strange bed? Pindar asks this question and Aeschylus gives the answer.

While Agamemnon lay ten years before Troy, revenge was brewing in the palace of Argos where his wife, Clytemnestra,

combined in love and hate with Aegisthus, son of Thyestes. For the king had sacrificed his daughter, Iphigenia, at Aulis and had driven the father of Aegisthus from his homeland, and when he returned his brother had served up his own children to eat at a sinister banquet. Now the couple awaited the return of the king to take a dreadful revenge upon him. At last the signal, despatched from Troy by beacons lit on islands and mountains, telling of the capture of the city reached Argos where on the palace walls day and night stood the watchman, picking up the signals and reporting them to Clytemnestra. A herald sent on ahead by Agamemnon confirmed the news that Troy had fallen in the tenth year and that the king and his court would soon appear with the captive, Cassandra, the Trojan prophetress. Clytemnestra welcomed her husband with purple carpets spread on the floor across which Agamemnon—at first with reluctance for fear of showing *hubris*—strode into the palace, Clytemnestra followed, after she had threatened and warned the daughter of Priam. Cassandra replied in ominous words, hinting at the dreadful deed which was about to take place in the palace, of her son's revenge and of the death which awaited her. When the prophetress had disappeared into the palace and heard the dying screams of the king as he was strangled by his wife in the bath, she, too, fell a victim to the jealousy of the queen. Aegisthus was now king in Argos. Agamemnon's son was far away being brought up in Phocis by Strophius. With his friend, Pylades, the son of Strophius, Orestes, came to Argos to avenge his father. He met his sister, Electra, by Agamemnon's tomb. The brother and sister recognized each other and Orestes told his sister that Apollo had ordered him to avenge the murder of his father. 'It is decreed that bloodshed demands further blood. For murder evokes the Furies who pile new blood guilt on previous murders.' If Orestes did not carry out the dreadful deed of avenging murder by murder, appalling punishment would ensue. The Furies would rise from the father's blood and plague him with madness and terror. He would be excluded from sacrificing to the gods and from any traffic of his fellow men. Electra gave him her full support and Orestes killed Aegisthus and then his mother. According to Apollo's decree he was to visit the shrine in Delphi

where he would be cleansed of his blood guilt, but here 'his mother's gruesome hounds' intervened:

'What women are these of Gorgon shape, robed in grey, their hair entwined with serpents? I can remain here no longer.'

Aeschylus: *Oresteia*

The Furies of the mother pursued him.

Plagued by the Erinyes who had been spurred to new rage by the shade of his mother, Orestes came as a suppliant to Delphi. The god who was his patron and had given orders for the murder, cleansed him and ordered him to Athens where the question would be decided whether he would be freed of his guilt, whether he had behaved justly or unjustly and whether he could be released from the power of the Erinyes. So once more, as a suppliant, he came to Athens to the shrine of Athene, whose image he was allowed to embrace without desecration because he was cleansed in the cult. Athene set up a court of Attic citizens and she herself conducted the proceedings in which the Furies were the plaintiffs, Orestes the defendant, Apollo the witness and counsel for the defence. Orestes was acquitted of his blood guilt, the Areopagus was founded for all time as the court of Athens, the Furies were satisfied by the promise of a cult in which for the future they were to be known as the Eumenides or 'well-disposed'. They were to watch over Athens, see that the earth was fruitful, preserve the herds and keep the godless at bay.

ORESTES AND IPHIGENIA

ONLY a certain number of the Furies obeyed the sentence pronounced in Athens, and others continued to persecute Orestes until he came once more to Delphi. Here he was told by Apollo that to free himself from the Furies he must go to Tauris on the Black Sea and bring back to Attica the image of Artemis which had once fallen there from the sky. Here, in the land of the Taurians, lived his sister, Iphigenia, who was supposed to have been sacrificed to Artemis in Aulis, but had been spirited away by the goddess and made her priestess by the king of the land—Thoas. All Greeks who arrived there were sacrificed to Artemis.

Orestes arrived with his friend, Pylades, at the shrine of the

Taurian goddess to fetch the image. Taken prisoner by the inhabitants they were brought to the priestess to be sacrificed. When Iphigenia heard that the strangers came from her own land, from Mycenae, she wanted to spare one of them and to send a letter to her brother, Orestes. She read the contents of the letter to the two prisoners.

'Iphigenia sends thee this missive. She whom thou thought to be dead at the Aulis sacrifice is alive. Bring me back home before I die in an alien land. Free me from the curse of my foreign sacrifice and gruesome rites. If thou dost not come I will bring down the curse upon thy house, Orestes.'

Euripides: *Iphigenia in Tauris*

In this way Orestes recognized his sister in the priestess and she knew that he was her brother. He told her of his fate and of Apollo's order that he should return the sacred image to Attica. Iphigenia declared herself ready to follow her brother home with the image and devise a cunning plan to outwit Thoas. She maintained that the two Greeks, because of their blood guilt, were not ripe to be sacrificed, and that the image had been desecrated by the gaze of the murderers. The purification ceremony must take place on the seashore. They would then board the ship of Orestes unnoticed. But when the barbarians learnt of her flight and tried to prevent her by force, Athene herself restrained Thoas from pursuing the fugitives.

Iphigenia returned with her brother and Pylades to Greece, and placed the image of Artemis in her shrine at Brauron in Attica. When Iphigenia died she was buried in this sanctuary. Orestes returned home to Argolis where he was joined by Hermione, the daughter of Menelaus, on the death of her husband, Neoptolemus, and the girl married her old suitor. Orestes died at a great age in Argolis where he was buried. But the Spartans, in obedience to a Delphic oracle, later brought his remains back to Sparta. His friend, Pylades, married his sister, Electra.

NEOPTOLEMUS

ON the advice of Thetis, Neoptolemus returned home across country to Thrace where he met Odysseus in the land of the

Cicones. On the way the teacher of Achilles—old Phoenix—died and was buried with all ceremony. Neoptolemus came at last to the land of the Molossians where he became king and Andromache, Hector's wife who had been given to him as his share of the booty, bore him a son, Molossus. Only then did he return to his native Phthia, where he found his grandfather, Peleus, still alive. He then married Hermione, the daughter of Menelaus, who had been promised him in Troy and the marriage took place in Sparta. This marriage, however, remained childless. Since Neoptolemus had a son by Andromache, Hermione became a rival and supported by Orestes, who had previously been betrothed to her, Neoptolemus was murdered by the Delphians in the shrine of Apollo where a tomb was raised to him. Andromache returned to Epirus. Her son became the founder of the royal house of the Molossians from whom later stemmed Olympias, the mother of Alexander the Great.

According to the legends Tyndareus gave Orestes his granddaughter, Hermione, in marriage during the war, but since Menelaus felt bound to the promise he had given to the son of Achilles before Troy she was later taken from Orestes and married to Neoptolemus. When the latter was killed in Delphi, Hermione returned to her first husband.

CALCHAS

CALCHAS also left Troy on foot, accompanied by the Lapithae, Leonteus and Polypoites, Podalirius, the son of Asclepius, and Amphilocheus, the son of the seer, Amphiaraus. After wandering through Asia Minor they came to Clarus on the coast by Colophon, where they met the seer, Mopsus, son of Apollo, and Manto, the daughter of the Theban seer, Tiresias. Calchas had been told by an oracle that he would die the day he met someone wiser than himself. In Clarus he entered a riddle-solving contest with Mopsus. Pointing to a small fig tree Calchas asked him how many figs it had borne. His opponent replied 10,000, enough to fill a bushel, with one fig over. When the figs were counted his estimate was found to be correct. Mopsus now asked his question. Bringing in a pregnant sow he asked how many little pigs she would bring into the world and when. Calchas could not reply,

so Mopsus said: 'Ten small pigs, including one male, and she will drop them tomorrow morning at the sixth hour.' He was correct and Calchas died from the shame of his defeat. His companions continued on their way and settled in various places in Asia Minor.

DIOMEDES

WHEN Diomedes set out for Troy he was married to Aegialia, the daughter of Adrastus. But Aphrodite, nursing hatred for the sons of Tydeus who had wounded her in the battle outside Troy, took her revenge on him by contriving that in his absence his wife could commit adultery with the Argive youths, and in particular with Cometes, the son of Sthenelus. On his return Diomedes tried to kill the adulterer, but he took refuge at the altar of Athene. Diomedes then left the land and it is said that he wandered to Italy.

THE WANDERINGS AND HOMECOMING OF ODYSSEUS

THE TWELVE ADVENTURES

AFTER the destruction of Troy, Odysseus set sail with his twelve ships. At first the wind drove them towards the Thracian coast to Ismarus, the city of the Ciconians. Odysseus' warriors—they probably numbered about 700—destroyed the city and captured great booty. But then, against the will of their leader, they lay down to carouse and drink on the shore, and in the grey light of dawn the Ciconians fell upon them and about six men from each ship were slain.

Driven by a northerly gale, they sailed for many days and nights past Malea and Cythera to the land of the Lotophagi where the inhabitants lived on lotus plants. Eating these roots, however, brought forgetfulness. Odysseus sent three of his men ashore as scouts, but they ate of the lotus, thought no more of their return home and had to be brought to the ship under duress.

After sailing farther, they reached the land of the Cyclopes who lived apart in caves and without laws, each man for himself. Off their mountainous country, lay a small island inhabited only by goats, with a very fine harbour. Here the ships cast anchor. Next morning Odysseus rowed over to the land of the giants and from the shore they saw a huge cave with an open space in front of it, surrounded by boulders and trees. Odysseus, with twelve of his men, went up to the cave with a goatskin of sweet wine, part of their recent booty. The owner of the cave, the one-eyed giant Polyphemus, was away, but they found plenty of milk and cheese and kids in pens, and they ate from these supplies. That evening

the giant returned, drove his sheep in the cave to milk them leaving the rams outside in the courtyard, and closing the entrance to the cave with a huge boulder. As soon as he lit the fire, he spied the strangers and asked them where they had come from and who they were. Odysseus asked him amiably for hospitality. They were Greeks who had lost their ship after the destruction of Troy and had been cast ashore here. But the giant scorned the strangers' appeal to Zeus, the protector of hospitality, seized two of the crew, flung them to the ground like young puppies so that their brains oozed out from their broken skulls, and ate them limb by limb. Then he lay down to sleep. Next morning, after eating another two men, he left the cave with his flocks and rolled the boulder back across the entrance. Odysseus now planned revenge and flight. In the cave he found a huge olive tree trunk, cutting off a length, he peeled it, sharpened it to a point, and heated the end in the fire. That evening, when the Cyclops returned, he drove his entire herd of rams and sheep into the cave, and when he had eaten two more Greeks Odysseus offered him some wine. The giant quaffed a powerful draught of this unfamiliar drink. Then he asked Odysseus his name because he wanted to give him a gift in return. The sly Odysseus replied:

'No man my name is: no man am I called
By them who bear me, by all my crew . . .'

Odyssey I

And the giant replied:

'Then no man shall my prey be after all his fellows,
And they first; this gift I give you as my guest today.'

Odyssey I

Then intoxicated by the wine he fell back and went to sleep belching loudly and spewing up lumps of human flesh.

Odysseus now heated the point of his stick in the fire, took hold of it with four of his crew and plunged it into the Cyclop's eye. The giant roared so furiously, that the neighbouring giants ran up and asked him whether anyone had done him violence. Polyphemus replied from his cave; 'No man's cunning and violence have destroyed me.' But his comrades replied, 'If no man has

done you violence it must be some plague sent by Zeus which you cannot escape, so pray to your father, Poseidon,' and they left him. Odysseus then bound the rams together in threes with willow wands, and, beneath their bellies, he and his crew held fast to the wool of the strongest beasts' bellies. Next morning, when the blinded giant drove his herd out to the meadow to graze, he felt the backs of the beasts, but his prisoners escaped.

They drove part of the herd on to their ship and when they had put out to sea, Odysseus mocked the blinded giant. Polyphemus tore rocks from the mountain and flung them at the ship so that it was driven back to the beach by the waves. But they pushed off again and once more Odysseus raised his voice. 'When someone asks you what mortal destroyed your eye, say to him that it was Odysseus, the razer of cities, the son of Laertes from Ithaca.' Then Polyphemus cursed him and called down the wrath of Poseidon on the head of his enemy and continued to hurl rocks at him. His immortal father heard him. Odysseus now returned to the other ships.

On their journey they now came to Aeolia, a floating island surrounded by an iron wall. Here dwelt Aeolus, son of Hippotes, the god of the winds, with his six sons and six daughters. The strangers were given hospitality and when they left after a month, Aeolus gave them the winds enclosed in a bag of hide. Only the west wind was allowed to blow free and on the tenth day they came, with no mishaps, so close to their homeland that they could spy the fires of Ithaca. Odysseus, however, fell asleep and his crew opened the bag because they suspected that it contained a treasure, and the ships became a plaything of the freed winds and were driven back to Aeolia. But Aeolus drove them away from his island because they were obviously hated by the gods.

Now they had to row in a dead calm, and on the seventh day they came to Telepylus, the city of Lamus in the land of the Laestrygones. Their king was Antiphates and they were a race of giants. Through narrow straits they reached the harbour, which was surrounded on all sides by tall cliffs. Odysseus alone anchored his ship outside the harbour entrance. Then he sent three men on reconnaissance. At the Artacia spring near the city gate, they met the king's daughter fetching water, and she pointed out her father's house. They saw an enormous woman

call her husband from the market place; he approached, seized one of the strangers and ate him. Attracted by the cries of their king, the giants threw blocks of stone down from the heights, smashed the ships and fished the drowning and dying men out of the water to provide their abominable meal. Odysseus alone survived with his ship.

From here they sailed to the island of Aeaea, where lived the sorceress, Circe, sister of Aeëtes and daughter of Helios and the Oceanid Perseis. There they hid the sole ship that remained to them in a bay and lay up in their grief for two days and two nights. Odysseus then went ashore and from a height he could see smoke rising from a house lying in the midst of a wood. On his return to the ship he killed a stag with his spear and brought it back to the crew for food. On the following day, they drew lots and Eurylochus was detailed to make a further reconnaissance with several of his companions. They came to the house of Circe around which wolves and lions were prowling. These had once been men and had been changed by the sorceress into beasts. Inside the house singing at her distaff was the goddess. When the Greeks drew her attention to them by their cries, Circe came out and invited them to a meal. They all accepted with the exception of Eurylochus who suspected some treachery. In the food that she set before the mariners, Circe had mixed a magic potion, and as soon as they had eaten it she touched her guests with a staff and they were changed into swine which the goddess drove into her sties. Eurylochus returned in horror to the ship and related what he had seen. Odysseus seized his weapons and set out for the house of Circe. On the way he met Hermes disguised as a youth who gave him advice. The god told him how he could outwit the witch and at the same time gave him a magic herb with a black root and milk white blossom, known to the gods as the herb moly, which would protect him against enchantment. Circe also invited Odysseus amiably to eat with her, but when she touched him with her magic wand and uttered her spell, 'Now go into the stall and lie with your companions,' he took out his sword as Hermes had advised, and the goddess fell at his feet crying: 'No mortal, as yet, has ever withstood the magic potion. You must be Odysseus of whom Hermes told me. Replace your sword and we will share this abode in love.' But Odysseus refused until she had

sworn to him that she would cast no further spells on him. When they sat down at table he refused to eat until the goddess had restored his companions to their human shape. Then she went into the stall, smeared the pigs with an unguent, and they became men once more, younger and more handsome than before. And their comrades were summoned from the shore, the ship was beached, and they all began to feast.

They spent a whole year on the Island of *Aeaea*, but then the crew began to think of their return home, and when *Odysseus* mentioned their desires to *Circe*, she agreed. But first, she said, they must go down into *Hades* and consult the shade of the blind soothsayer, *Tiresias*. Only he of all the dead had been given knowledge and the capacity to think by *Persephone*. The north wind would carry them safely across the ocean. And she gave *Odysseus* good advice how to conjure the soothsayer and make him speak. So they armed themselves for the journey. One of the crew, the youngest, *Elpenor*, had drunk too much wine the night before, and sought the cool air on the roof of the house before going to sleep. When he woke up with a start the next morning in the excitement of departure he sprang up and fell from the roof and broke his neck. But no one noticed it.

So *Odysseus* sailed next morning with a favourable wind given by *Circe*, and they came to the spot beyond the ocean indicated by the goddess. *Odysseus* dug a trench and poured out for the dead, honey, milk, wine and water, added white barley meal and promised them a sacrifice on his return to *Ithaca*. Then he slaughtered a ram and a black sheep allowing the blood to stream into the trench, and meat was roasted for *Hades* and *Persephone*. But the shades who approached in great numbers, he held off with a sword until *Tiresias* appeared. He noticed the shade of *Elpenor* whose corpse still lay unburied in *Aeaea*, and when he had heard his story he promised that due honours would be paid to the dead man on his return. Then the shade of *Tiresias* approached, drank the blood and replied to the questions put by *Odysseus*. *Poseidon* was angry with him for blinding his son, *Polyphemus*. Nevertheless, they would reach their country if they spared the sacred herds of *Helios* on the Island of *Trinacria*. If they were harmed he would arrive home alone in a foreign ship and there he would find arrogant men who were wasting

his property and courting his wife. But he would take his revenge on them. Then he should conciliate Poseidon by a great sacrifice in the land of the Thesprotians and return home. He would rule in peace and death would come to him at a great age out of the sea. After these words the seer returned to Hades. Then Odysseus allowed the shade of his mother, Anticlia to drink from the blood and she told him of Penelope, Telemachus and Laertes. He spoke, too, with men and women of the past and with the shades of Agamemnon, Achilles and Ajax and Telamonian, and saw the judge of the dead Minos, and the penitents Orion, Tityus, Tantalus and Sisyphus, and finally the shade of Heracles. But eventually so many shades had congregated around him that he grew afraid and hurried back to the ship with his crew, leaving the abode of the dead.

They returned to Aea and remained there one day, burnt the corpse of Elpenor and buried his ashes in a tomb. Circe gave her friend much advice on the journey and told him of the dangers that awaited him. Then they set sail with a favourable wind sent by the goddess. Odysseus now told his companions the advice of Circe, and how the first adventure that awaited them could be overcome. They were approaching the sirens that enchanted with their songs every mariner who approached. Anyone who heard their voices failed to return home and on their beach lay piles of bones of men who had fallen victim to their wiles. Odysseus stopped up the ears of his crew with wax and had himself tied to the mast. They rowed on since the wind had fallen and soon they heard the song of the sirens. 'Come here, great Odysseus, pride of the Achaeans! Stay your ship and listen to our song. For no one has passed once he had heard our honey sweet song. But he enjoys the singing and returns home rich in knowledge. For we know everything that the Greeks and Trojans suffered before Troy at the will of the gods, and we know everything that happens throughout the whole world.' The hero listened and begged the crew to untie him, but they bound his thighs even tighter and they passed the danger unharmed.

Once the island of the sirens lay behind them, they heard the powerful thunder of the surf and the oarsmen stopped rowing in terror. Ahead of them lay two huge rocks a bow's length apart. The one rock towered to heaven, its peak always wreathed with

clouds, and in the centre to the west, where they had to pass, was a cave in which lived the terrifying, roaring Scylla. She had twelve short legs and six heads on long necks. These she stretched out of the cave to catch dolphins and seals, but also mariners who tried to pass. Opposite was another rock on which a wild fig tree grew, and beneath this lived Charybdis, who three times a day poured the sea into an enormous funnel until the sandy sea bottom was visible and then spewed it out again. She was the greater danger, according to Circe, 'Do not approach Charybdis when she gulps down the water, for then not even Poseidon could rescue you. But rather, approach Scylla, for it is better to sacrifice six of your crew than to lose them all. So Odysseus sailed his ship close to Scylla but did not mention the danger to his crew. So they avoided Charybdis, but Scylla's evil head seized six of the strongest members of the crew. Quivering, stretching their hands out to their friends and screaming loudly, they were devoured by the monster. When Odysseus told the story later to the Phaeacians he added; 'That was the most appalling sight I witnessed throughout my arduous journey.'

Then they came to Trinacria, the beautiful island of Helios, where the oxen and sheep of the sun god grazed. Both Tiresias and Circe had warned Odysseus not to touch the beasts and he wanted to sail past without landing. But Eurylochus opposed him. 'Let us at least spend the night ashore and take a rest.' So Odysseus gave way after making them swear that they would not slaughter any of the god's cattle. During the night, however, Zeus sent a storm and contrary winds blew for a whole month. True to their oath the crew lived on the supplies that Circe had given them, and when these began to fail they lived on the fish and birds which they caught. In his distress Odysseus went away to pray to the gods, but they made him sink into a deep sleep and while he slept Eurylochus persuaded his companions to commit the evil deed. 'Of all types of death, death by hunger is the worst. Better be drowned by the anger of Helios than die of starvation on this island.' So they slaughtered a pair of oxen and when Odysseus returned he smelt from afar the pleasant odour of burning fat and he violently reproached the crew. But this was of no avail because the cattle had already been slaughtered. Zeus, however, promised Helios his revenge. For six days they lived

from this meat and then the storm abated and they put to sea. When they could see only sky and sea Zeus sent a black cloud directly overhead. The west wind raged, thunder and lightning smashed the ship and the entire crew was drowned. Only Odysseus remained alive. Lashing the keel and the mast together he made a raft and let himself drift. Then the west wind fell and the south wind sprang up and carried the shipwrecked mariner back into the domain of Charybdis. As the monster was about to gulp down the water, Odysseus held tight to the fig tree and remained hanging there like a bat. When the waters spewed up the beams he let himself fall, climbed on to the raft and paddled away with his hands. For nine days he drifted at the mercy of the current and on the tenth night he was thrown up on the island of Ogygia, the home of Calypso, the mighty goddess, daughter of Atlas. She received him lovingly and promised to make him immortal. He remained seven years on this island. The nymphs implored him to remain and to forget Ithaca. But he was filled with a longing for his home and wished to see once more from afar before he died the smoke of his city. Pallas Athene who had always protected him had compassion and begged her father, Zeus, to send Hermes to Ogygia with orders that Calypso release the hero. So Hermes fastened on his golden sandals which bore him swiftly across the sea, and like a gull he flew in and reached the grotto of the goddess with the fair tresses. He was well received, plied with nectar and ambrosia while he told her the will of Zeus. Calypso sullenly and sadly accepted the edict for she was powerless in the face of Zeus. Hermes returned, his mission completed. Then Calypso went to the patient Odysseus, who sat as usual on the seashore longing for his home. She told him of his forthcoming departure and promised that she would help him to build a ship. Then after a meal in the grotto she said to him: 'You want to abandon me and return home. If you knew what sorrow awaited you there you would remain with me as an immortal, however much you longed for your wife. I am surely no less than she.' And Odysseus replied to the goddess: 'Do not be angry. Certainly Penelope is less than you and she is mortal while you are eternally young, but every day I long to return home. And even if the gods destroy my ship once more, I will

bear with it since I have suffered so much already in the waves and during the war.'

On the following day Odysseus felled trees with an iron axe and built himself a seaworthy ship with sails. Calypso supplied him with food and drink and he put to sea, navigating by the stars, keeping the constellation of the Bear to port and on the eighteenth day, in the early morning light, the land of the Phaeacians hove in sight. During this voyage his old enemy, Poseidon, was enjoying a great sacrifice of bulls and rams with the Aethiopians. But now, on his return journey, he caught sight of Odysseus' small craft on the waves. Angry that the gods had gone behind his back in his absence and permitted the return of the hero, he summoned the wind, lashed the waters with his trident and the darkness descended from the sky. Then the hero bemoaned his fate, deeming lucky the Achaeans who had fallen before Troy. Had he but succumbed to a lance hurled at him by the Trojans in the battle for the corpse of the son of Peleus! There he would have become famous and would have been given a grave. Now he must die a miserable death. A wave flung him from the raft and the sail and mast capsized. With great difficulty he managed to struggle back to the wreck and prayed aloud to Pallas Athene, who sent the sea nymph, Ino-Leucothea, the daughter of Cadmus, to his aid. She climbed on to his raft and handed him her veil to bind round his body, so that the sea could no longer harm him. When he reached land, she said, he was to throw the veil over his shoulder into the sea. Then she disappeared beneath the waves, diving like a water hen.

Then a mighty wave caught his raft, tore the beams asunder and Odysseus fell with the veil round his waist into the sea and tried to swim. Poseidon's revenge was complete and he turned away from his victim. But Athene calmed the storm winds, leaving only the north wind to blow. For two days and nights Odysseus wrestled with the waves, and then quite near he saw land, but only steep cliffs towering out of the wild breakers which threatened death if he were flung against them. At last he found a flat beach at the entrance to a river. Bruised and half conscious he staggered ashore, threw the veil of the goddess back into the sea, crawled in his exhaustion into the bushes, covered himself

with leaves and Athene gave him deep sleep. He was on the island of Scheria in the land of the Phaeacians.

During the night Athene appeared in a dream to Nausicaa, the daughter of the Phaeacian king, Alcinous, and Arete, in the guise of one of her playmates and ordered her to go the following morning to the shore and to wash their raiment in the troughs at the mouth of the river. Nausicaa set out in the morning with a team of mules borrowed from her father, taking a few maidens from the city. After they had done their washing and prepared the meal they began to play ball. They were enjoying themselves but just as they were thinking of journeying home, Athene guided the ball so that it fell into the sea. The girls' cries woke Odysseus. He crawled out of the bushes, bruised, naked and filthy, holding a branch in front of him. When the girls saw him they fled in terror, with the exception of the king's daughter. Odysseus greeted her respectfully and begged her to show him the way to the city and to give him a cloth to cover his nakedness. She welcomed the unknown stranger. Odysseus cleansed and anointed himself with oil. Athene rejuvenated him and Nausicaa gave him food and drink. As night fell she led him into the city, telling Odysseus to follow at some distance for it was not seemly for her to enter with a stranger and she could become an object of gossip.

So Odysseus entered the city alone that evening. Athene covered him with a mist so that no one should see him and then appeared before him in the guise of a young girl and led him to the king's palace. Its incredible luxury aroused the stranger's amazement. He entered just as the Phaeacian nobles had sat down to their evening meal, embraced the knees of the queen (and then the darkness with which the goddess had surrounded him fell away) and begged to be taken home. Alcinous promised next day to summon the elders to decide how he was to be sent home.

On the following day a ship was equipped, a great feast took place at which the divine singer, Demodocus, beloved of the Muses, to the accompaniment of his lute sang of the famous episodes of the Trojan war. There were games in which the Phaeacian youth took part and the stranger distinguished himself at throwing the discus. For the dancing the singer chose the song of Ares and Aphrodite and the cunning of Hephaestus. Then the

guest was given rich gifts and when he entered the king's chamber after his bath he met at the door Nausicaa, who said to him: 'Adieu, my friend, and think of me when you return home for you owe your life to me.' And the hero replied: 'Nausicaa, daughter of great Alcinous, may God grant that the day will dawn when I reach my home. Then I will thank you each day as if you were a goddess for you, my dear girl, saved my life.' Then he sat down with the king to supper and at his request Demodocus sang the lay of the wooden horse which Epeius built and which was taken into Troy through the cunning of Odysseus. When the singer sang this epic Odysseus covered his face and wept. Alcinous, noticing this, ordered the singer to be silent. Then he asked the name of his guest and his homeland so that the Phaeacians could escort him there and asked further how he had come to the island. Odysseus revealed his identity. 'I am Odysseus, son of Laertes, known to all men for his subtlety, and my fame reaches to the sky. My home is Ithaca.' He then related his wanderings from Ilium to the island of the Phaeacians.

When he had ended his tale his audience was silent and each man brought him presents in a tripod and on the second day the gifts were taken to the ship. They prepared quarters for the guest on the after deck and set sail. Next morning at dawn they entered the bay of Phorcys in Ithaca and went ashore by an olive tree near a grotto of the nymphs. Here at the foot of the olive tree they carefully laid the sleeping hero with all the treasure he had been given in Scheria and sailed away. Then Poseidon, still nursing his revenge, said to his brother, Zeus: 'In future I shall no longer be respected by the gods since men no longer respect me. The Phaeacians, who are my descendants, have brought Odysseus with great treasure in their ship to his homeland.' Zeus gave him permission to take his revenge on the bold seafarers. The sea god hastened to Scheria and when the swift ship approached the island he smote it with his hand and changed it into a rock, fast-rooted to the sea bed. The Phaeacians on the shore saw the tragedy and Alcinous, the king, said: 'Woe is me! An old oracle has now been fulfilled. Poseidon hates us because we are such good escorts of men. It was prophesied that one day a ship returning home from some escort would be smashed and changed into a high mountain to encircle our city. This has been fulfilled.

Come, let us sacrifice to the god and do not let us in future conduct home any stranger who happens to land on our island. Perhaps Poseidon will have compassion so that no mountain will surround our city.'

These were his words and he sacrificed to the god.

At dawn Odysseus woke on the shore of Ithaca but did not recognize it. At first he thought that the Phaeacians had deceived him but none of his treasure was missing and now Athene appeared to him in human guise and convinced him he was really home. They hid the treasure in the grotto of the nymph and she gave him advice how he should proceed.

For three years the nobles of Ithaca and the surrounding islands had been paying court to Penelope, the wife of Odysseus. They sat in the palace slaughtering oxen, swine and goats. But his wife had remained true to him and had waited for his return. Athene now changed Odysseus into an old beggar clothed in rags and told him to go to Eumaeus, the swineherd, who had remained faithful to him. She herself would hurry to Sparta where his son, Telemachus, was staying with Menelaus and recall him back.

EVENTS IN ITHACA

AFTER his father had been away from home for twenty years, Telemachus had left in the tenth year after the destruction of Ilium to get news of his father's disappearance. Athene, in the guise of the Taphian, King Mentes, had told him to visit Nestor at Pylos and Menelaus in Sparta. There perhaps he would learn news, and she provided him with a ship. Euryclia, the faithful old nurse, gave him food and drink for the journey. This woman had been let into the plan after swearing to say nothing to his mother until he had been gone twelve days. So he sailed from Ithaca and Athene went aboard in the guise of Odysseus' old trusted teacher, Mentor. They came to Pylos, the city of old Nestor. Telemachus and Mentor-Athene met Nestor and his sons, including the youngest—Pisistratus—just as they had returned from making great sacrifices to Poseidon. They were received with great cordiality and Nestor had much to tell of the fate of the heroes returning from Troy—of the Atrids, in particular of the tragic end of Agamemnon, of Diomedes, Neopto-

lemus, Philoctetes and Idomeneus and of his own happy home-coming. Then he invited his two guests to follow him into the palace. Mentor-Athene refused, however, and the goddess flew off in the guise of an eagle. Thus they recognized that their guest was under divine protection and Nestor prayed to Pallas Athene.

The son of Odysseus spent that night in the palace and the following morning they sacrificed a steer with gold horns to the goddess. After the banquet, Telemachus, accompanied by Nestor's youngest son, Pisistratus, drove in a fast chariot to Pherae where they were received by Diocles, and went on the following day to Menelaus in Sparta.

Here a double wedding was taking place in the king's palace. Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, was marrying Hermione, the daughter of Menelaus and Helen; and the son of Menelaus, by a concubine, Megapenthes, was marrying a Spartan woman, the daughter of Alector. Here Telemachus learnt what Menelaus had heard on his return journey from the soothsaying sea god, Proteus, in Egypt. Odysseus was held in thrall on the island of Calypso by the nymph, without comrades and without ships, longing for his home. He also heard of the fate of young Ajax and of Agamemnon. Menelaus and Helen also told him of the deeds of Odysseus before Troy.

The friends spent a few days in the luxurious palace of Menelaus until early one morning Athene warned Telemachus to leave. She told him that some of the suitors were waiting for him at the straits between Ithaca and Same with a ship, and advised him how he could avoid this ambush and conceal the fact that he had returned to Ithaca. Laden with rich gifts, Telemachus and his friend drove back to Pylos via Pherae. But since he did not wish to stay once more with Nestor he was taken immediately to his waiting ship. While he and his crew were busy getting the ship ready to sail, a stranger appeared. He was fleeing from an avenger for he had killed a member of one of the great Argive families. His name was Theoclymenus a descendant of the seer, Melampus, himself a soothsayer and augurer. He begged to be taken aboard. He was not refused and the ship reached the southern promontory of Ithaca after eluding the suitors in ambush. From here Telemachus sent the ship on to the city where the palace lay, entrusted Theoclymenus to one of his comrades

and, on the advice of Athene, went with one of the crew to visit the swineherd, Eumaeus.

A few days prior to this Odysseus had landed in Ithaca with the Phaeacians and had also been told by Athene to visit Eumaeus who, of all the servants, had remained truest to his absent master. He lived on a farm a long way from the city. He had 600 sows in their styes and 360 boars in the meadows whose numbers decreased because he had to send a fat boar every day to the city for the suitors to eat. Four assistants helped him to look after the pigs and four wolf hounds guarded the farm and the herds. When Odysseus appeared in the guise of a beggar, the hounds began to bark furiously, but he sat down calmly on the ground and laid aside his staff. Eumaeus ran up and chased the beasts away with stones. He invited the stranger into his hut, gave him food and told him of his master who had disappeared and was probably dead, of Penelope and Telemachus and of the shameful behaviour of the suitors. When the beggar was asked for his name and origin he concocted a story. He had come from Crete and had fought with Odysseus at Troy; after many adventures and shipwreck he had come to the land of the Thesprotians and been received courteously by the king of that land. Here he learnt that Odysseus had arrived a little before, but had left again with his great treasure in order to consult the oracle of Zeus at Dodona. Then the king was to lead him to Ithaca. He himself had left in an earlier ship from the land of the Thesprotians, but during the voyage the crew had bound him and sold him as a slave. On landing in Italy he had escaped and was now in search of asylum. Odysseus would very shortly be here, escorted by the Thesprotians. Eumaeus did not believe his story for many people had come and told him of his mistress of Odysseus and of his approaching return merely to get hospitality and gifts. He said that he would give his guest food and drink without his having to tell any fairy stories.

Odysseus remained as a beggar for some days on the farm and learned a great deal from Eumaeus about his mother, Anticlia, who was now dead, while his father, Laertes, was leading a lonely life in the hills. The swineherd also related his own life story. He was descended from a royal house, had been stolen by the Phoenicians as a boy and sent to Ithaca and sold to Laertes.

On the morning of the day Telemachus landed in Ithaca, Eumaeus and the beggar were sitting at their meal when they heard footsteps approaching and saw the dogs jumping up with joy at the stranger. Telemachus crossed the threshold. Eumaeus greeted him with affection and introduced him to the stranger. Telemachus then sent him into the city to tell Penelope that he had returned. As soon as he was alone in the hut with his guest Athene, visible only to Odysseus, beckoned him outside. In the courtyard she told him that it was now time to set out with his son and defeat the suitors. She enveloped him in a fine robe and restored his powerful stature and he returned to the hut. When Telemachus saw him he averted his face because he believed he was in the presence of a god, but Odysseus revealed his identity and the son found this difficult to believe. Weeping they embraced each other.

Then Odysseus told his son Athene's plan for fighting the suitors and learnt the number of his enemies—108 nobles from Dulichion, Same, Zacynthus and Ithaca, together with eight servants, a herald and a minstrel. Two men could do very little against this host, but Odysseus promised the aid of Zeus and Athene.

As Eumaeus came to the city, the ship, which had taken Telemachus to Pylos and which he had left in the harbour of Phorcys, arrived in the great bay. Penelope and the suitors learned from Eumaeus and the ship's herald that Telemachus had made a safe return. Soon the vessel which had been sent to ambush Penelope's son returned with the mission unaccomplished and the suitors were very angry. Eumaeus returned to his hut where Odysseus, once more in the guise of a beggar, was talking to his son.

Next morning Telemachus went alone to the city to see his mother, fetched his guest the seer, Theoclymenus, and led him into the palace. He told his mother what he had learnt of Odysseus on the journey, and the soothsayer added that he had heard from the birds that her husband was already in Ithaca. Later that day Odysseus, still disguised as a beggar, visited the city with Eumaeus. On the way they met the goatherd, Melanthius, driving a couple of kids to the palace for the suitors' midday meal. He insulted, cursed and kicked the strange beggar. Odysseus

controlled himself and refrained from killing the man with his cudgel. When they entered the palace a dog—a very old dog named Argus—which Odysseus himself had raised was lying on a midden. He wagged his tail when he saw the old man and tried to get up but collapsed and died on recognizing his master after twenty years. Odysseus then followed Eumaeus into the banqueting hall where the suitors were carousing and listening to the minstrel, Phemius. Still a beggar in rags and leaning on a stick he entered his father's palace. Telemachus ordered the swineherds to give him bread and meat. Then he went from table to table asking the revellers for gifts and many gave him arms. But Antinous, one of the noblest and most aggressive of the suitors, pushed him away with insults. Picking up a stool he flung it at him, hitting him on the shoulder. Penelope heard this from her nearby apartment and when she learnt how the impious suitors had behaved to the beggar she sent for Eumaeus who told her that the old man knew Odysseus. She asked to speak to him in person, but Odysseus sent a message that he would come to her after dark so that none of the suitors would observe him.

The men in the banqueting hall continued to sing and dance. Then another beggar came in—Irus—who looked upon the palace as his preserve and was furious to find that someone else was poaching. He started to curse and tried to drive the stranger out, but Odysseus thrust him aside. Irus said angrily: 'What's that bundle of rags gabbing about, like some old woman? I'll knock his teeth out like a sow laying waste the fields. Gird up your loins so that the others can see us fight!' Antinous laughed loudly at this infamous performance and offered, as the prize, a goat's stomach filled with blood and bacon. Odysseus smote the beggar a mild blow on the ear with his fist so that the blood flowed from his mouth and dragged him out into the courtyard. As a prize he was given the blood sausage and two loaves of bread. He had to suffer great humiliation from the suitors, and also from one of the maids—Melantho, the sister of the ruffianly goatherd—until as night fell they returned to their home.

Then Odysseus and his son took the weapons from the walls of the banqueting hall—helmets, shields and lances—into the armoury, while the maids cleaned and swept. Penelope came from the women's apartments, sat down by the fire, brought up

a stool for the stranger and asked him who he was and whence he came. And he told her half-truth half-fiction of himself and of Odysseus whom he had met in Crete on the way to Troy and related what had happened to him in the land of the Thesproians. Penelope confessed how she had put off the decision to take one of the suitors for three long years. She had told them she wanted to weave a shroud for old Laertes and that they must be patient until she had completed the task. At night, however, she unpicked all the stitches she had sewn during the day. Then she announced her intention of holding a contest on the following day. Anyone who could draw the bow of Odysseus and shoot through the rings of twelve consecutive axes would receive her as his wife.

Penelope ordered her maids to prepare a bed for the stranger and to wash his feet, but Odysseus refused, saying that he was used to sleeping on the bare floor but that perhaps one of the old women could fill him a footbath. Then the old nurse, Euryclyia, brought in a pan filled with warm water and as she bathed his feet she discovered the scar on his leg which he had received from a boar out hunting, and she knew that he was Odysseus. In her joy she was about to call Penelope who was still sitting by the fire but Odysseus placed his hand over her mouth and silenced her. At last they retired to rest, Penelope and her maids to the women's apartments and Odysseus into the outer hall.

Next day was the feast of Apollo. The shepherds brought much slaughtered cattle into the palace. The goatherd, Melanthius, once more mocked the strange beggar with harsh words, but the cowherd, Philoetius, was friendly to him. He bewailed his absent master and abhorred the behaviour of the suitors. When the latter sat down to table once more the beggar again received his portion from Telemachus, who upbraided the suitors. He would no longer tolerate that his guest should be insulted and repeated this warning when one of them—Ctesippus—with an oath threw a cow's hoof with all his might at the beggar. This was a grim omen, and as we have already told, Theoclymenus foretold the death of the suitors. But they merely laughed at him.

Penelope now came from her apartments into the banqueting hall carrying the bow and arrows of Odysseus. Twelve axes were stuck in a straight line into the floor with their handles upwards.

A ring was fastened to each handle and these twelve rings were also in alignment. The contestants had to shoot their arrow through all the rings. Anyone who succeeded would become the husband of Penelope. The first suitors to try failed dismally and wanted to postpone the contest until the following day since today was a feast day. Odysseus then asked for the bow. The suitors were furious and wanted to refuse but mother and son waved them aside and then Telemachus ordered his mother to return to her apartments.

Despite the noisy abuse of the suitors Eumaeus handed the beggar the bow and arrows. In the meantime Odysseus had revealed himself to the cowherds and ordered them to close the courtyard gate. Euryclia bolted the door to the women's apartments. Then Odysseus aimed and shot his arrow through the rings on the axis, threw off his rags, leaped to the door and cried: 'Now I will choose a target that no mortal has yet hit.' And he shot an arrow through the throat of Antinous, the most powerful and most noble of suitors. In their terror the others leaped up and tried to seize their weapons but they had disappeared. Odysseus then revealed himself and the suitors offered to make restitution. But Odysseus shot arrow after arrow and as each man was slain Telemachus fetched weapons from the armoury for himself, his father and the two faithful cowherds. But Melanthius, the goat-herd, secretly brought in weapons for the suitors through a side door which Eumaeus had forgotten to close. But as he went out for the second time he was pursued by the two other cowherds, bound hand and foot and hung from the ceiling of the room. The battle in the hall continued. Athene appeared in the guise of Mentor and all the men were killed with the exception of Phemius, the minstrel, and Medon, the herald, whose lives Telemachus spared. Then Odysseus, through Euryclia, summoned the maids who had let in the suitors. They were to carry the dead men into the hall which would be cleaned and fumigated, and the girls would be hung up on a line for their treachery. Melanthius would have his ears, nose, arms and legs cut off and his genitals torn out and thrown to the dogs. Penelope was quietly asleep in her apartment when the faithful Eumaeus came hurrying in to tell her that Odysseus had arrived and killed all the suitors in the banqueting hall. But Penelope found 'this difficult

to believe and thought that a god must have destroyed the men on account of their impiety. But when the old woman told of the scar which she had seen on the leg of Odysseus Penelope came down to the hall in consternation. Even then Odysseus found it difficult to convince her that he really was her husband who had returned at last. Not until he showed her the unmistakable scar did she believe him.

While the two spent the night together, from the banquetting hall could be heard the sound of dancing and the strains of music in the street, for Odysseus had told his trusted followers to conceal the murder of the suitors from his subjects. Next day Odysseus, his son and the two cowherds, armed and shrouded in a cloud by Athene, paid a visit to Laertes, outside the city.

They found the old man weeding his garden and Odysseus revealed himself. Then his father's servants came and they sat down to a meal. In the meantime news of the suitors' deaths had spread through the city and the people streamed into the market place where Eupithes, the father of Antinous, incited the men to take their revenge. But the herald, Medon, and the seer Halitherses, were against this. With the aid of the gods Odysseus had succeeded, and the murdered men were to blame for consuming the goods of a stranger and for trying to seduce a prince's wife. Half the men went over to Eupithes, armed themselves and, athirst for revenge, rushed to the property of Laertes. A new holocaust would have resulted had not Athene begged her father, Zeus, to bring about peace and she was sent to Ithaca to arrange a reconciliation. When Odysseus learned that an armed mob was approaching he made his followers take up their weapons and prepare to oppose the enemy. Then Athene appeared to Laertes in the guise of Mentor and ordered him to cast the first spear. The weapon hit the leader of the revolt, Eupithes, and he fell groaning to the ground. Pallas Athene prevented any further slaughter and the thunderbolts of Zeus forced them to make peace.

The souls of the suitors who had fallen in the banquetting hall were collected by Hermes, the accompanier of the dead, and carried across the ocean to Hades. There they met the souls of Achilles, Patroclus and Antilochus, son of Nestor, whose ashes lay in an urn in a tomb by Troy, and they met, too, the souls of

Ajax, the son of Telamon, of Agamemnon and of Achilles bewailing the lot of the Atrids who had been slain in their house by Clytemnestra. Achilles had had a far better fate, replied Agamemnon, and he told how the Achacans before Ilium had staged a magnificent funeral feast for him with great games. When the souls of the suitors appeared in their hosts, Agamemnon recognized among them Amphimedon, who had received him in the old days in Ithaca when he and Menelaus had come to induce Odysseus to leave for Troy. Amphimedon now told him of their gruesome fate, of the return of Odysseus to his home and the revenge he had taken upon them. Then spoke the son of Atreus: 'Fortunate son of Laertes, cunning and skilful Odysseus! Really you can boast of a wife of great virtue and understanding—Penelope. She constantly thought of her husband and her fame will never die. In her honour the gods will compose beautiful songs for mortal men. Clytemnestra, on the other hand, who murdered her husband will be the subject of contemptuous songs among humans and will bring even the best of women into disrepute.'

THE LAST YEARS OF ODYSSEUS

AFTER Odysseus had become ruler in Ithaca once more, he brought offerings to the nymphs and drove to Elis to visit his herds. Here he was received cordially by Polyxenus, presented with a wine jug adorned with the saga of the treasure house that Trophonius and Agamedes had once built for Augeas. He then returned to Ithaca. But later he wandered on foot to the Thesproians, who lived in Eporus and placated Poseidon by a sacrifice. Tiresias, the blind seer in the underworld, had advised him to do this. 'When you have killed the suitors in your palace, take an oar on your shoulder and wander until you come to men who know nothing of the sea, do not mix salt with their food and have seen neither ships nor oars. I will give you another clearer sign which you must never forget. When another traveller meets you and says that you are carrying a shovel on your shoulder, then plant your oar firmly in the ground and sacrifice a ram, an ox and a boar to Poseidon.'

At that time Queen Callidice ruled in the land of the Thesproians and she asked him to share her bed and the throne, and bore

him a son—Polypoites. When the queen died he handed over the reins of office to Polypoites and returned to Ithaca.

When Odysseus was a very old man, a stranger landed on the island and stole a few of his cattle. Odysseus hastened to meet the man and a fight broke out between them. This stranger was Telegonus, his own son by Circe. When he grew up he learned from his mother the name of his father and set out in search of him. So he came to the island of Odysseus and killed him unwittingly in the fight, learning only later that he had killed his own father. He had done this with a strange weapon—a lance which had a ray's sting as its point. Thus the prophecy of Tiresias which he had revealed to Odysseus in the underworld was fulfilled. Death would come to him out of the sea. As soon as Telegonus realized his terrible deed he brought his father's corpse to the island of Circe, taking his stepmother, Penelope, and half-brother, Telemachus with him. There Telegonus married Penelope and Telemachus married Circe, who endowed them all with immortality.

We know of another two sons born of Circe and Odysseus, Agrius and Latinus, who far in the west became rulers of the sacred islands of the Tyrsenians. It is also related that Penelope, by Hermes, became the mother of Pan and that she was buried in Arcady on the road between Mantinea and Orchomenus.

ATTIC SAGAS

THE EARLIEST KINGS

CECROPS who sprang from the Attic soil, half-man, half-serpent, ranks as the first Attic king. He called the land previously known as Acte after himself, Cecropia. In his age the gods decided to choose cities in which they should be given special veneration. Poseidon was the first arrival in Atica, and he plunged his trident into the citadel rocks, making water spurt forth, which has since been known as the 'Lake of Erechtheus'. But then came Athene and when she showed her credentials to Cecrops, she planted an olive tree which was later to be seen in the sacred grove of Pandrosus. But since a dispute arose between the two deities for this land, Zeus set up twelve gods as judges, who gave the land to Athene since Cecrops swore that she had planted the first olive tree there. The goddess named the city Athens. Poseidon, however, in his rage flooded the fields of Eleusis, the Thriasian Plain.

Cecrops had three daughters—Aglaurus, Erse and Pandrosus. Aglaurus was seduced by the god Ares, and presented him with a daughter, Alcippe. Later, Halirrhothius, a son of Poseidon, assaulted this girl one day when she was fetching water. She complained to her father, Ares, who laid an ambush for the evil-doer and slew him when he tried to repeat his violation of the girl. Then Poseidon complained of his son's murder, and the twelve gods were once more called to judgment and Ares was exonerated. This was the origin of the court of law on the hill of Ares, the Areopagus.

The following story is told of these three daughters: Athene had visited the smithy of Hephaestus to persuade him to forge

new weapons for her. But Aphrodite filled the god with lust and he laid his hand on the virgin. She freed herself from his embrace and the earth was fructified by his seed and gave birth to Erichthonius. Athene fed the child, unknown to the gods, because she wanted to make him immortal. She therefore hid him in a chest which she gave to Pandrosus, forbidding her to open it. Her sisters, however, overcome by curiosity, wanted to discover the secret and when they lifted the lid of the chest they found the child there with a snake twined round him. They were bitten by the snake and died. Another version is that Athene made them mad and they threw themselves down from the rocks of the Acropolis. Erichthonius became king of Athens, placed an image of Athene on the citadel, and founded the Panathenean games.

A son of Erichthonius, or perhaps autochthonous, was Erechtheus. This man had several daughters, one of whom, Orythia, was carried off by Boreas, the north wind, and taken to his homeland in Thrace where she bore him two windswift sons, Calais and Zetes, who later took part in the voyage of the Argonauts. A daughter of Orythia was Chione, who by Poseidon became the mother of Eumolpus. He became Prince of Eleusis, and Demeter herself taught him and the other princes, including Triptolemus, the secret mysteries and he became the ancestor of the priest race of Eleusis. Triptolemus went with his chariot to spread the art of agriculture throughout the world. But a very different story is told of Eumolpus. He was a Thracian who at the time of Erechtheus marched on Athens with a great army. In his distress the Attic king consulted the Delphic oracle as to how he could defeat this superior force. The god replied that if he would sacrifice his daughter he would conquer. The king obeyed and the Thracians were expelled.

Another daughter of Erechtheus was Procris who married Cephalus. To test his wife he left her and remained eight years abroad. When he returned home secretly in disguise, in order to lead her into temptation, he showed her beautiful garments which he promised her if she would make love with him. When his wife saw the magnificent jewellery, and observed that the stranger was very handsome, she was about to accept. Then Cephalus revealed himself, but there was a reconciliation. For the next few days he was constantly out hunting. His wife believed that he was visiting a mistress and asked one of the ser-

vants, who usually accompanied him, if he knew anything. The man said that he had only seen his master standing on top of a mountain shouting loudly, 'Oh, cloud, descend.' Then Procris hid herself near the spot, and when her husband called out once more she approached him to inquire the meaning of his words. In his rage, Cephalus flung his spear and killed her. Later he was absolved of this murder by the Thebans, and in gratitude offered to rid them, with the aid of his fast hounds, of a destructive fox which lived on Mount Teumessus and caused great damage in their land. But they could not catch the beast and during this aimless hunt Zeus changed the fox and the dogs into stone. Cephalus was hauled before their Areopagus and banished. Later, Eos, the dawn, carried him away and bore him to Phaeton.

Erechtheus had another daughter, Creusa. Apollo loved her, and in a cave on the slope of the Acropolis she bore him a son whom she called Ion, and abandoned him in the cave. Then Hermes, at the request of his brother Apollo, brought the boy to Delphi where he was brought up by the priests and later became servant in the service of the god. His mother then married Zuthus, the son of Aeolus. This man had come to the aid of Athenians in a war and ascended the throne after the death of King Erechtheus. Since their marriage remained childless they set out on a pilgrimage to Delphi. Here they found the son of Creusa, and took him home. After this they were allowed to have children—Dorus and Achaeus.

PANDION AND AEGEUS

ERECHTHEUS' heir was Pandion. He had two daughters—Procne and Philomela. The Thracian Tereus, who lived in Daulis on Parnassus, had helped the Attic king in a war, and been given in gratitude Procne, who bore him a son, Itys. However, he then raped his sister-in-law, Philomela, and so that she could not complain, he cut out her tongue. But she wove the story of her fate on a tapestry which she presented to her sister who thus became aware of the crime. The two women killed Itys and served up his flesh to their father. When the king learned of this gruesome deed, he pursued the sisters one of whom was changed into a nightingale and the other into a swallow. Tereus himself was transformed into a hoopoe.

Pandion was then banished by the sons of Metion—a son of Erechtheus—and fled to Megara where he became king. On his death his heir was Nisus whom, as we have already seen, his daughter, Scylla, betrayed to the Cretan king, Minos. A son of Metion was Daedalus. A great smith, he was jealous of the talents of his nephew, Talos, and killed him by throwing him over a cliff. For this crime he was condemned by the Arcopagus and fled from Athens to the country of King Minos in Crete. The sons of Pandion returned later to Attics, regained the power, and Aegeus became king of Athens. He drove out his brother Lycus who fled to Asia Minor to Sarpedon, the brother of Minos. His people were called Lycians after him.

For many years Aegeus had no children and he sought the reason in the anger of some god. On consulting the oracle at Delphi he was given the advice: 'I should not loose the wineskin's prominent foot till to the hearth ancestral back I come.'

Since the words of the oracle seemed too obscure he went to Pittheus, son of Pelops, in Troezen to have it interpreted, for this king was a seer and a very wise man. He made his guest drunk and placed him in the bed of his daughter, Aethra. On his departure, Aegeus hid his sword and sandals under a large rock and told the king's daughter that if she gave birth to boy she should keep him. But if he grew strong enough to move the rock, she should send him with these tokens to Athens. Aethra bore him a son—Theseus. He, however, also ranked as a son of Poseidon who had lain with the king's daughter the same night. When Aegus was back in Athens, the Cretan king, Minos, attacked the city to avenge the death of his son, Androgeus, who had been killed in Athens, and he laid a fine on the Athenians that every nine years they should send seven boys and seven girls to Crete to be sacrificed to the Minotaur.

THESEUS

In the meanwhile Theseus grew up in Troezen under the care of his grandparents. When he was old enough he removed the rock, found the sword and sandals of Aegeus, and set out to find his father in Athens. Many dangers lay in wait for him on this road but the youth overcame them all by his heroism.

The first violent creature he met was at Epidaurus, where Periphetes, a son of Hephaestus, lay in wait for travellers and killed them with his iron club. Theseus slew him and took away his weapon. But the province of Corinth was, above all, infested with bandits. First there was the all-powerful Sinis, a son of Poseidon, who lived in a fir copse near Corinth, and was known as Pityocampites, the 'bender of fir trees'. He forced his victim to pull the top of a fir tree down to the ground, then released it so that he was flung into the air and crashed to the ground. Or he bent two firs together, bound the unfortunate man between them and let them go so that he was torn in two. Theseus inflicted upon him the death penalty he had inflicted upon so many others.

In his further wanderings Theseus came to the plain of Crommyon where lived a wild sow called Phaea. He killed her. Then he entered the straits of the Scironian cliffs by Megara where a sheer, white rock fell down to the sea. It was called after Sciron, a bandit who forced all travellers to wash his feet. While they were doing so he kicked them into the sea where a huge turtle killed them. Theseus flung Sciron over the cliffs and he was smashed to pieces on the rock below.

In the plain of Eleusis a fifth danger was Cercyon, who forced every traveller to wrestle with him, and was always the victor. But Theseus lifted him in the air, flung him to the ground and killed him. This Cercyon was king of Eleusis. His daughter, Alope, had been loved by Poseidon and she bore him a son which she told a servant to abandon. But the boy was suckled by a mare and brought up by a shepherd who found him when looking for the mare, took him in and raised him. Later, when the truth of his birth came to light, Alope was flung into prison by her father, but Poseidon changed her into a spring on the border of Eleusis which, since then, has borne her name. The son was called Hippothöon and he inherited his father's kingdom which Theseus usurped after overpowering Cercyon.

Then quite close to Athens, on the sacred way, Theseus met the giant Damastes, also known as Procrustes or Procoptas, who possessed the heavy hammer of his father, Polyperion. He had two beds, one large and one small. When a tall traveller came he laid him in the small bed and smashed every part of the stranger which overlapped the bed. A small man he laid in the large bed

and flattened him until he filled the bed. He found his master in Theseus. So Theseus came to Athens and the fame of his deeds had preceded him. In the meanwhile, King Aegeus had accepted Medea when she fled from Corinth and promised him a potion to cure his sterility. She now persuaded him to kill the dreadful stranger whose name the king did not know, and to make him fight a wild steer which was ravaging the plain of Marathon. It was the same steer which Heracles, on the orders of Eurytheus, had fetched from Crete and allowed to roam free in Argolis. Theseus caught it and brought it in chains to the king in Athens where it was sacrificed to Apollo. Other legends say that Theseus killed it during the hunt. Medea then tried to poison Theseus, but Aegeus recognized his son by the sword he was wearing, and the sorceress was banished from the land.

At this time another convoy of young Athenians was due to be delivered to the Minotaur in Crete, and Theseus volunteered. Minos himself had come to Athens to fetch the seven youths and seven maidens, and they set sail.

‘The dark-prowed ship through surges cleft her way
To Crete, and battle-bider Theseus bare
With all those doomed to be the man-bull’s prey,
Twice seven Ionian children passing-fair.
The North-wind smote on her far-gleaming sail
By grace of Pallas, Aegis-brandisher.
Then goads of love-crowned Kypris, stings of bale,
Began in Minos’ tyrant heart to stir,
That he refrained him not from outrage proud,
But on the cheek of one white girl he laid
A wanton hand. Eriboia shrieked aloud
Unto Pandion’s scion bronze-arrayed.
And Theseus saw the deed: full height he sprung;
Sudden beneath his brows flashed his dark eye,
As indignation’s bitter anguish stung
His soul, and unto Minos did he cry:
“Ha! *thou* a son of Zeus most mightiest—
Or base-born churl that knoweth not to rein
In righteousness the brute within his breast?
From outrage arrogant those hands refrain!

What weird soever the resistless Fate
God-sent, and scales of Justice, shall ordain,
That cup, what time it cometh, soon or late,
Will we receive, and to the dregs will drain.
But now—forbear thy caitiff purpose thou!
If Phoenix' noble child of gracious name
Bare thee the Zeus 'neath Ida's brow
To be the chief of men in power and fame,
Me too the child of Pittheus wealth-renowned
In union with Poseidon the Sea-king
Bare to a God. The Nereids violet-crowned
Over her head a golden veil did fling.
Therefore, thou captain of Crete's war-array,
I warn thee, this thy wantonness refrain
That breeds but grief; for verily I would pray
Never to see dawn's lovesome light again,
If thou by force had wrought thy foul intent
On any of this fair young company.
Nay, we will try the steel's arbitrament
Ere then! The issue shall with heaven lie."

Thus far he spake, that hero battle-peerless;
And all the shipmen with amazement heard
The warrior's stern defiance utter-fearless.
But Helios' kinsman's wrath was fury-stirred.
A web whose warp and woof held life's perdition
He wove, and cried: "Supreme in might, hear me,
Zeus, father! If the white-armed maid Phoenician
In very truth did bear me unto thee,
Now unto me do thou send down from heaven
A token none shall fail to understand,
The swift bolt of the fiery-streaming levin!
But thou—if to the Shaker of the land
Aethra the maid Troezenian truly bore thee,
For proof thereof, this golden signet-ring
Whose splendour flashes on mine hand before thee,
Up from the dark deep sea-floor do thou bring.
Ay, cast thy body down to thy sire's dwelling!
So shalt thou know if He doth hear my prayer,

Cronion, lord of thunder terror-kneeling,
Whose sway is over all things everywhere."

That daring prayer by Zeus the all-puissant one
Was heard, and he vouchsafed to Minos then
Transcendent honour, to his own dear son
Granting a grace all-manifest to men.
The lightning flashed. He saw that welcome sign:
To glorious heaven the king war-steadfast raised
His hands—"Thou seest, Theseus, yon divine
Boon wherewith Zeus," he cried, "his son hath graced.
Thou then into the thunder-tolling sea
Leap! so shall Cronos' son who gave thee birth,
Poseidon, the Sea-king, bestow on thee
Renown transcendent through green-vestured earth."
He spake: Sank Theseus' heart from that essay
No whit; upon the strong-knit stern he stood
And leapt. The sea's white-blossomed mead straightway
Welcomed him in, and closed o'er him the flood.
Then gladness thrilled the soul of Zeus' son.
He gave command to hold adown the wind
The goodly-fashioned ship fast flying on—
But Fate prepared far other ways to find.

Hard-thrusting blew the North astern; the pine
Sped fast. But Athens' children quaked with fear,
Deeming he leapt to death beneath the brine,
And from their flower-bright eyes shed many a tear.
But dolphins, haunters of the watery ways,
Upstayed the mighty Theseus: onward fast
They bore the hero to the dwelling-place
Of his sire, Lord of Steeds. And so he passed
Into the palace halls where Gods abode;
And there with trembling awe he looked upon
Blest Nereus' glorious daughters. Far and wide
Flame-like a splendour from their bright limbs shone.
And twined about the glory of their hair
Did fillets golden-braided gleam and glance;
And joyance filled their hearts, as here, as there

Softly their feet were floating in the dance.
And there he saw his sire's beloved bride
Throned in that goodly palace of the sea:
Imperial Amphitrite lovely-eyed
Clad him in purple-rippling bravery.

She laid withal a wreath of rich adorning
On his crisped hair, of fadeless roses wrought
Dark-splendid, which upon her bridal morning
She of the love-wiles, Aphrodite, brought.
No miracle of the high Gods' devising
To men whose hearts are right is past belief.
By that ship's taper stern from sea-gulfs rising
There was he! With what thoughts he smote the chief
Of Cnossian men aghast, when midst the plashing
Wave-crest he rose unwetted! Oh, he seemed
A marvel! On his limbs the sunlight-flashing
Gifts of the Gods with heavenly radiance gleamed.
And up from hyaline halls there came a crying,
The chanting of the Sea-maids splendour-throned
In new-born rapture. The great deep replying
Echoed their joy with voices thunder-toned.
Then from the deck hard they sang the paeon,
Those youths and maids in accents sweetly blent.
O Delian, may thy soul by choir-hymns Chian
Glow gladdened! Grant fair fortune heaven-sent!

Bacchylides, 17

So they came to Crete where the Minotaur was eagerly awaiting his victims in the labyrinth.

But Theseus won the lobe of Ariadne, the daughter of Minos. She helped him to defeat the human bull. On the advice of Daedalus she gave him a ball of thread, one end of which he fastened to the labyrinth, and unwinding the ball he passed through the blind alleys until he came upon the monster and killed him. Then with the help of the scarlet thread he found his way back to the entrance. The following night Theseus set sail secretly with Ariadne and his Athenian comrades after he had put the Cretan ships out of action so that Minos could not pursue

him. They landed first on the island of Dia (Naxos), and here Athene appeared to him and told him to abandon the daughter of Minos for she was to become the wife of Dionysus. Theseus sailed away leaving Ariadne asleep on the island. Dionysus came to her and presented her with a golden garland. But she was killed later by Artemis because she had sacrificed her virginity.

The Athenian ship also put in at Delos and here the rescued victims erected a shrine to the honour of Apollo, who preceded Theseus with his lyre. Then they returned to Athens. When Theseus sailed away, Aegeus had given his son a purple sail. On the return journey he was to hoist this in place of the black one used on the outward journey so he could see from a distance that his son had returned safe and sound. But in his joy Theseus forgot to change the sail and when Aegeus saw the black sail from the citadel he flung himself down from the cliffs.

After the death of Aegeus, Theseus ruled in Athens. But he fell foul of the giant, Pallas, a brother of Aegeus and his many sons. He defeated them in battle and killed Pallas. His victory was due to the herald of Pallas, Leos, who had betrayed an ambush planned by the Pallantids. Of this Leos it is told that he had three daughters and when Attica was suffering from a famine, on the advice of the Delphic oracle they had sacrificed themselves of their own free will and the Athenians raised in their honour the Leocorion shrine.

Theseus was a close friend of the Prince of the Lapithae, Perithous, son of Ixion, who in the underworld had to pay penance with his wheel. Perithous was also reputed to be son of Zeus. This friendship began with the marriage of Perithous when Theseus had supported his friend in a battle against the Centaurs. Together they had embarked on another expedition against the Amazons who lived on the Black Sea and Theseus brought back the Amazon Antiope as a prisoner. By her he had a son, Demophon. But later he abandoned her and to avenge the insult the warlike women attacked Athens. They laid siege to the Areopagite hill outside the city, and burnt offerings to their ancestor, Arcs. But they were eventually defeated by Theseus and driven out of Attica.

Another son of Theseus and Antiope was Hippolytus. When Theseus later married Phaedra, the daughter of Minos, he sent

his son to Troezen to be brought up by his grandfather, Pittheus, and to remove him from the influence of his stepmother. Here the handsome youth grew up as a devoted servant of Artemis, and despised Aphrodite. On a short visit to Athens, where he attended the mysteries, his stepmother saw him and fell desperately in love with him. Later, when Theseus visited Troezen with her to make penance for the killing of the Pallantides and was banished for a year, this love completely conquered her. Torn between passion and honour she saw no other issue except death which she found by her own hand after Hippolytus had repulsed her and told a servant of her love for him. Theseus learnt from an envoy the terrible end of his wife in a letter she had written before her death, falsely accusing Hippolytus of trying to rape her. He cursed his son and entreated his father, Poseidon, to punish him. When Hippolytus drove his chariot along the seashore the god sent a bull out of the sea which made the horses shy and he was dragged and killed.

The unlucky man, however, mortally wounded, caused Artemis, the patron of the dying, to appear to his father and declare his innocence, blaming Aphrodite, and the king announced that in future he was to be honoured as a hero in Troezen.

Theseus made an alliance with his friend, Perithous. They were to give each other mutual aid so each of them took a daughter of Zeus for wife since they themselves were the sons of gods—Theseus the son of Poseidon, and Perithous the son of Zeus. Together, they carried off Helen, who was still a young girl, from Sparta and brought her to Aphidnae in Attica and placed her in the care of the mother of Theseus. But when Theseus was absent, Helen's brothers, the Dioscuri, approached with an army, liberated their sister and took her back home. Aethra was also carried off and this is how she became Helen's servant in Troy. In this expedition the Dioscuri found support from Decelus who betrayed their sister's whereabouts in Aphidnae, and by Titacus, who betrayed the name of the place.

In gratitude for the help Theseus had been given by Perithous on his journey to Sparta, and true to his pact, he left with his friend to capture another daughter of Zeus as a wife for him. They wanted to ravage Persephone herself from the underworld. But

here they had no luck, for when they came to the underworld they were bound to a cliff, or, according to another version, invited by the god of Hades to table and found when they wanted to rise that they could not leave their seats. It is doubtful whether they ever returned to the light of day. It is said that Heracles freed Theseus when he went down to hell in the service of Eurystheus to fetch Cerberus.

The journey to Hades was Theseus' last adventure. Some legends say that when he returned from the underworld to Athens he found the land in the hands of Menestheus, son of Peteus, and had to flee to the island of Scyros. He was thrown over the cliffs by King Lycomedes and buried there. Later the Athenians brought his remains back to his own city.

Theseus' greatest success was the political unity of Attica. He created the council and authorities of the individual Attic cities and villages, and from now onwards all these institutions were situated in Athens. Thus he united all the provinces into a single state with Athens as the capital. He was famous for his mildness in receiving fugitives, such as the mothers of the seven who had fallen before Thebes and for whom he insisted upon a seemly funeral, and also for the welcome he gave to the unhappy Oedipus.

THE END OF THE AGE OF THE KINGS

MENESTHEUS had courted Helen in vain despite the rich presents he brought and thus he took part in the Trojan War as the leader of the Athenians with fifty ships. The sons of Theseus, too, Acamus and Demophon (the latter was either the son of Antiope or of Phaedra), set sail for Troy to fetch their grandmother, Aetura, who had become Helen's servant in Ilium. After the death of Menestheus they shared the rule in Athens. On the pattern of his father, Demophon showed himself cordial to fugitives, received the Heraclids in Attica and helped them in their struggle against Eurystheus.

When Thymoites, a great-grandson of Theseus, ruled in Athens, a border conflict broke out between the Athenians and the Boeotians, and to solve it, a single combat was proposed between the Boeotian king, Xanthus, and the king of Attica, Thymoites, but the Athenians refused the challenge, Then

Melanthus offered himself as a candidate on condition that should he win he and his issue should become rulers of Athens. This Melanthus was of the race of Neleus and had fled to Athens from Messenian Pylos where he had been driven by the Heraclides when they invaded the Peloponnesus. His conditions were accepted and he armed himself for the fray. When he approached Xanthus he called to him, 'You are wrong, Xanthus, to go into battle against me with another man and not alone.' Xanthus turned round to see whether anyone had followed him and at that moment Melanthus cast his spear and killed his opponent. He became king of Athens and was succeeded by his son, Codrus.

Under the rule of Codrus it came to a war between the Athenians and the Peloponnesians. The latter received an oracle that they would conquer provided they did not kill the Athenian king. But Codrus had learned of this oracle, disguised himself as a beggar and went out from the city as though bent on collecting firewood. Thereupon he met and killed two of the enemy with a sickle and was slain by the others. When the Peloponnesians learned that they had killed the king, they broke off the siege and returned home. Codrus was the last king in Athens and in future Archons were chosen, the first of whom for his lifetime was Medon, the son of Codrus. His brothers, including Neleus, migrated to Asia Minor and founded the Ionian cities there.

With the return of the Heraclids and their occupation of the Peloponnesians, the migration of the Neleid Melanthus from Pylos to Attica, and the settlement of the Asia Minor coast by the Nelids, the mythical age came to an end.

Some later sagas

WE feel it of interest to mention half a dozen of the most important sagas which have come down to us from the Hellenistic age.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

DAPHNE was the beautiful daughter of Amyclas in Lacedaemon, (see page 183), an enthusiastic huntress, and when hunting in Elis Leucippus, the son of Oenomaus, fell in love with her. Since she was unapproachable he dressed up as a girl and joined her companions. But Apollo had also cast his eye on her and jealous of his rival, contrived that the girls should bathe in a nearby stream and thus discover the deception of Leucippus. They fell on him in their anger but he escaped by the graces of the gods. When Apollo pursued Daphne she begged Zeus to rescue her and she was changed into a tree which was called after her, Daphne (laurel).

Sources: Phylarchus, historian of the third century, B.C.; Pausanius, VIII. 20 and others (Daphne as the daughter of the river god, Peneus, in Thessaly with no mention of Leucippus), Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (I. 452-567).

PHILEMON AND BAUCIS

IN the old days when the gods still walked on earth, Zeus and Hermes in the guise of men wandered through Phrygia. At night when they sought for shelter every door was closed to them. An elderly couple, however, Philemon and Baucis, received them amiably in their humble hut and offered them hospitality, and the few victuals that were in their larder. When during the modest meal they observed that the wine in the pitcher never grew less however much was drunk, they recognized the strangers as gods and wanted to make them an offering. But the strangers refused and led the old people up a foot-hill of the nearby mountain. When they looked back they saw that all the houses of their city had sunk into the ground and that their little hut had

been transformed into a magnificent temple. The two gods now told the couple to make a wish; they asked to be allowed to serve as priests in the new shrine and to die at the same moment when their last hour came. The gods granted their plea and after serving as priests for many years they found their death at the same moment, Philemon being transformed into an oak and Baucis into a lime, both of which continued to grow by the side of the temple. (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* VIII. 616-724.)

ECHO AND NARCISSUS

THE mountain nymph Echo, when Zeus took his pleasure with her companions, often kept suspicious Hera in conversation until the unfaithful husband had withdrawn unnoticed. As a punishment for the service which her eloquence had rendered to the fickle king of the gods, Hera took away from her the faculty of speech, so that she always repeated the last words of the person who had spoken before, but could never say anything on her own account. One day Echo saw handsome Narcissus, the young son of the Boeotian river god, Cephissus, hunting in the forest and fell in love with him. Later she saw him many times but she could never address him. But one day, when the young man lost his way in the mountains and called for help, by echoing his words she was able to draw attention to herself. But the hunter disdained her. She retired into the mountains, her body wasted away from grief and finally all that remained was her voice among the rocks, answering a man's individual cry without ever being seen. But Narcissus was punished for disdaining the love of both girls and youths. Catching sight of his handsome features in the mirror of a spring, he was consumed with love for himself and was changed into a flower which bore his name for ever. (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, III. 339-510. Cf. Euripides, *Andromache*, fragment 114 et seq. N, where Echo is mentioned for the first time.)

PYRAMUS AND THISBE

IN Babylon in neighbouring houses dwelt two children, Pyramus and Thisbe. As they grew up they fell in love with each other, but since their respective fathers forbade them any intercourse they used a crack in the wall between the two houses to exchange their words of love. One day they arranged to meet, as night fell, outside the city by the tomb of Ninus which was overshadowed by a mulberry tree. Thisbe was the first to arrive and lay down beneath the tree. A lioness appeared, its jaws still dripping with the blood of slaughtered cattle. The girl fled into a cave, losing her mantle which the lion mauled

leaving traces of blood on it. When Pyramus arrived and saw the spoor of the lioness and his love's blood-stained mantle he thought that she had been killed by the wild beast. He carried the mantle to the mulberry tree and stabbed himself on the spot where they were to have met, his blood mingling with the presumed blood of Thisbe. When Thisbe left her cave to keep her rendezvous she found her lover dying and killed herself. Their ashes were buried in a common urn. (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IV. 55-166.)

PYGMALION

PYGMALION, an artist from the island of Cyprus, carved a statue of ivory which was so beautiful that he fell in love with it. At his plea Aphrodite endowed it with life. He married the girl and she bore him a daughter, Paphos, who later became the mother of Cinyras, king of Cyprus. (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, X. 245-297. For Cinyras, see page 192.)

HERO AND LEANDER

ON the Hellespont, the narrows which divide Europe from Asia, the two cities of Sestus and Abydus faced each other. Hero was the priestess of Aphrodite in Sestus. To one of the great festivals of this goddess came Leander from Abydus and on catching sight of the beautiful girl his heart was filled with love. Now he visited her each night by swimming the Hellespont, guided by a light which his mistress placed in a tower on the beach where she lived. But on one stormy night the lamp went out and Leander was drowned. Next morning the waves washed up his corpse beneath Hero's tower. Hero plunged from the tower to be united with her lover in death.

Musaeus bases his Hero and Leander on a Hellenistic story, upon which the two letters of Ovid, *Heroides*, 11 and 18, are also based.

AENEAS, DIDO AND LAVINIA

WHEN, flouting the advice of Laocoön, the wooden horse was drawn into the city of Troy, and the Trojans, believing the words of Sinon, had retired to rest (see page 207), Hector appeared to Aeneas in a dream and warned him by the Trojan household gods, the Penates, whose images he himself had fetched, to flee and found a new home beyond the sea. In the meantime the Greeks had penetrated the city, but in a bitter battle Aeneas, with his father Anchises and his son Ascanius (who was also known as Ilus and later as Iulus), managed to flee from the burning and the killing into the nearby mountains (see

page 210). Here they joined up with other fugitives, built twenty ships and left the Troads. Fate decided that after a long journey and bitter fighting they should rule in Latium where, after many centuries, the city of Rome would be founded by their descendants. Jupiter saw to the fulfilment of this destiny, whereas Juno pursued the Trojans with bitter hatred, and Venus protected her son.

Their journey led them along the Thracian coast via Delos to Crete. Then via the Strophades in the Ionian Sea to Actium and Bythrotum in Epirus and via Tarentum to Sicily. Anchises, the father, died in Drepanum and was buried there. As the result of a storm in which all the ships with the exception of seven were lost they were driven towards the Libyan coast to Carthage where Dido ruled as queen. This woman, a daughter of King Belus of Tyre, had married Sychaeus in her Phoenician homeland; but her brother, Pygmalion, secretly killed her husband for his treasure. The murdered man appeared to her in a dream, revealed his death and his murderer, advised her to flee with the treasure to a safe place. So she left Tyre and founded a new city in Libya.

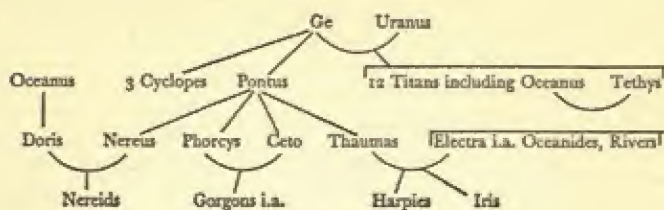
Dido gave the Trojans a hospitable welcome. Soon Amor approached her, sent by Venus in the guise of Ascanius and she was filled with an overwhelming love for the leader of the Trojans. But she resisted the wiles of Venus in an attempt to be faithful to her dead husband. In vain. In a grotto in which she had taken shelter in a storm while hunting she met Aeneas, and they were joined together in love. Aeneas would have remained for ever in Carthage had Jupiter not sent Mercury to tell the Trojans of his will. Aeneas obeyed the order of the god and took his leave of the loving woman. Nor did the pleas of Anna, the queen's sister, have any effect. The Trojans sailed away pursued by the curses of the disappointed Dido: an avenger would one day rise from her ashes and an implacable hatred would in future reign between the two peoples. Then the queen stabbed herself to death with a sword.

The Trojan fleet sailed back to Drepanum where Aeneas organized games in honour of his father, Anchises. They landed on the west coast of Italy at Cumae and the Sybil led him into the underworld. Here he met the shade of Dido who turned away angrily when she caught sight of him. He also met his father, Anchises, who showed him many shades who would be reborn in the future and become heroes in Roman history. Then the Trojans sailed to Latium at the mouth of the Tiber, where ruled Latinus, the son of Faunus and a nymph. The king was prepared to take in the Trojans, give them land for settlement and to marry Aeneas to his daughter, Lavinia.

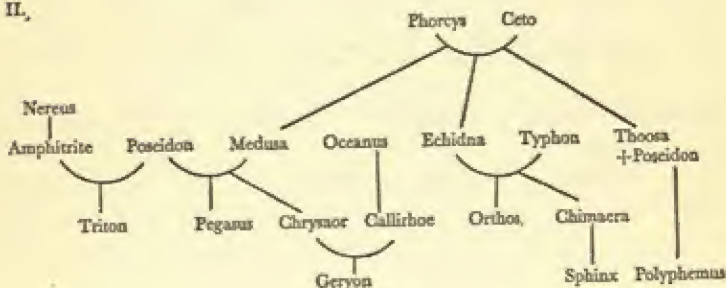
But once more grim Juno rose against the Trojans and incited Turnus, the prince of the Rutuli to fight the intruders, because he wanted Lavinia for his own wife. Turnus was eventually defeated and killed by Aeneas, and the time had come for the latter as the husband of Lavinia, to found the Trojan rule in Latium: after his death Iulus-Ascanius, built the city of Alba Longa. He was thus the ancestor of the Julian race to which later belonged Julius Caesar and Augustus, recognizing Venus as the mother of the Trojan house and their patron goddess. (Virgil, *Aeneid*, see page 43.)

GENEALOGIES

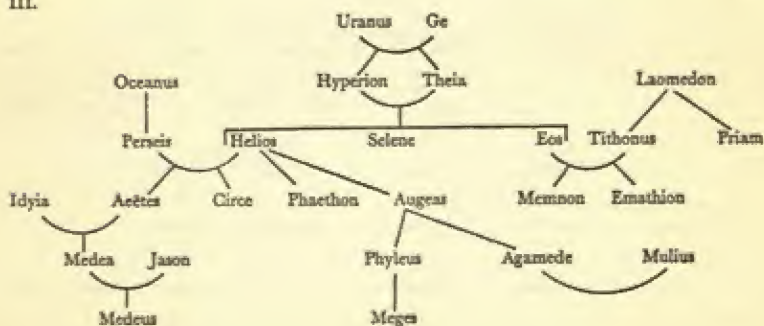
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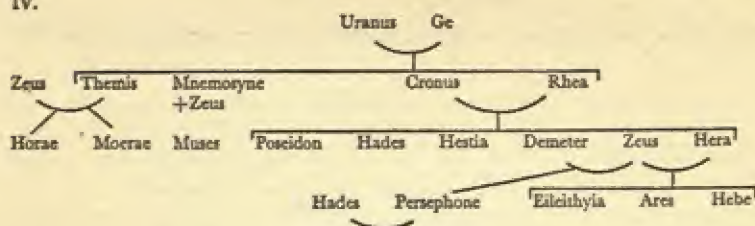
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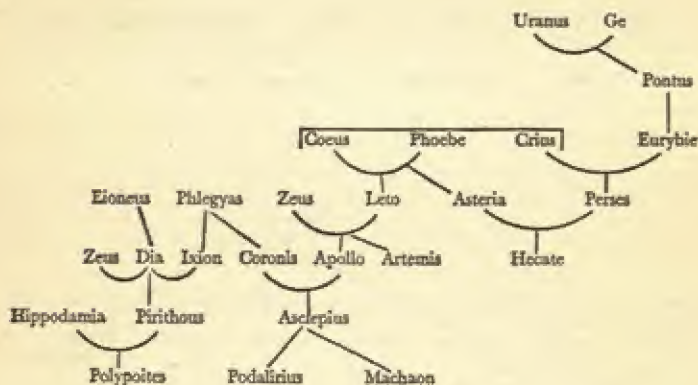
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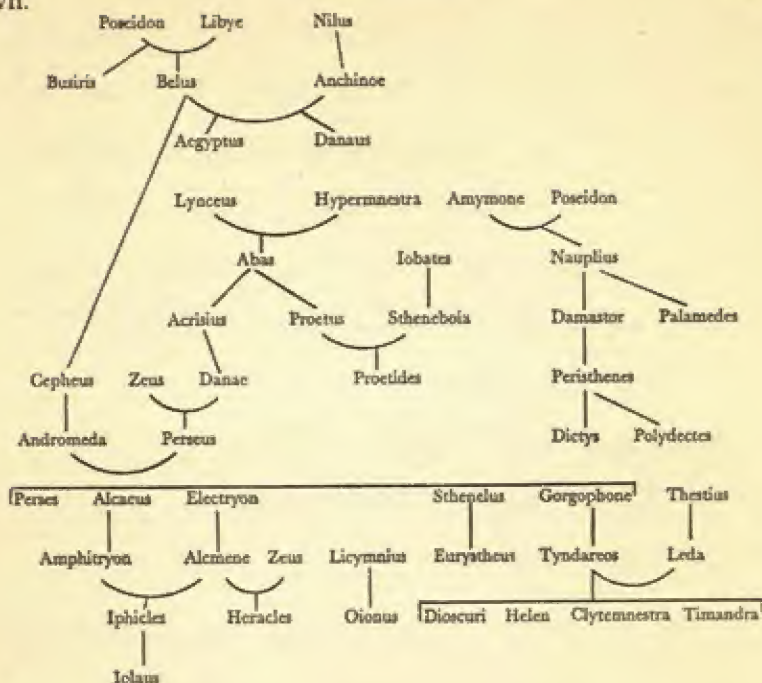
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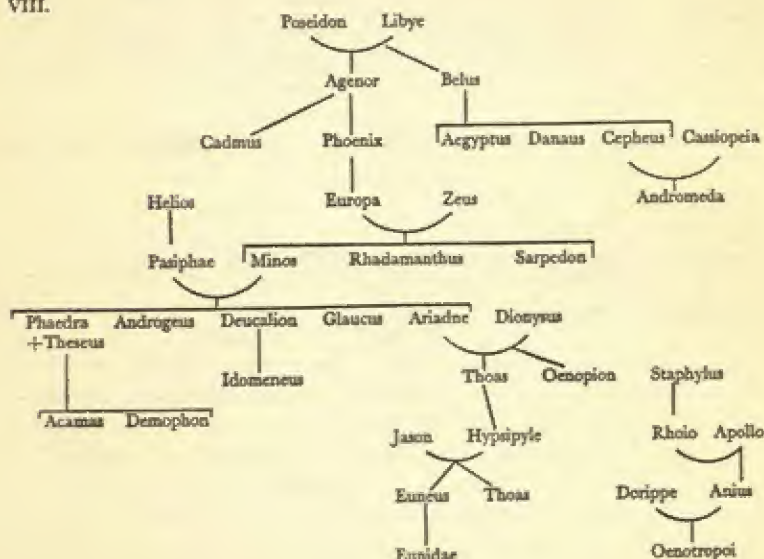
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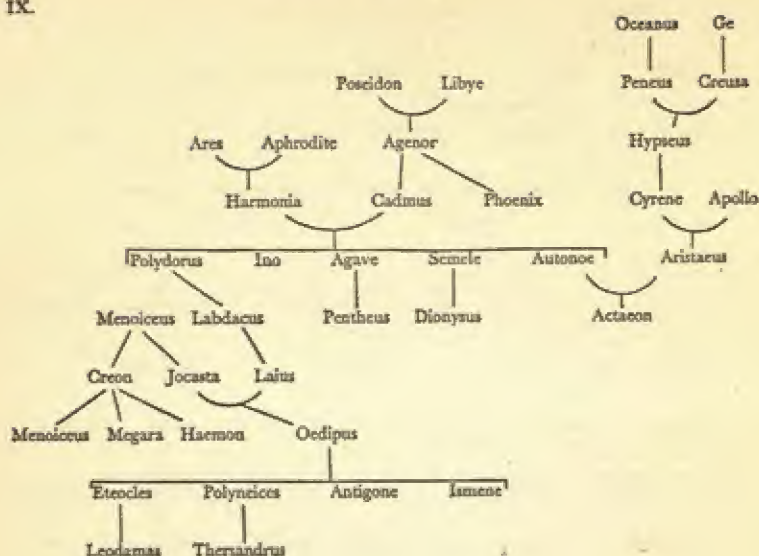
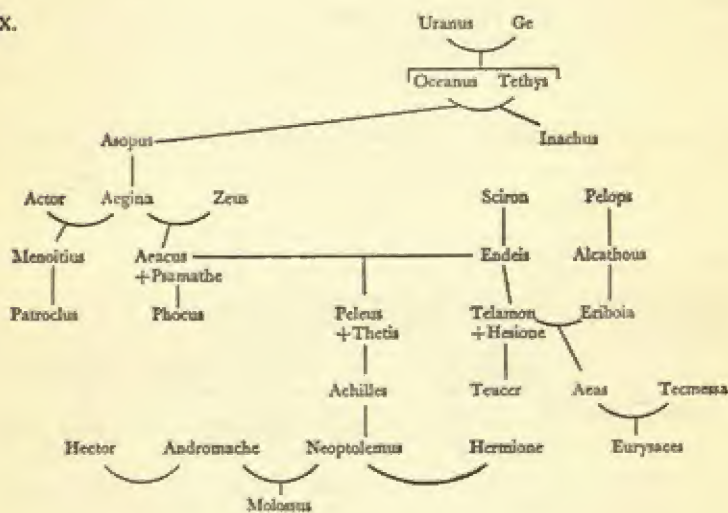
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GENEALOGIES

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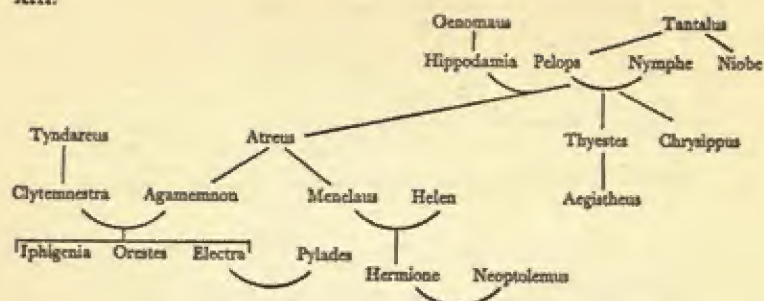
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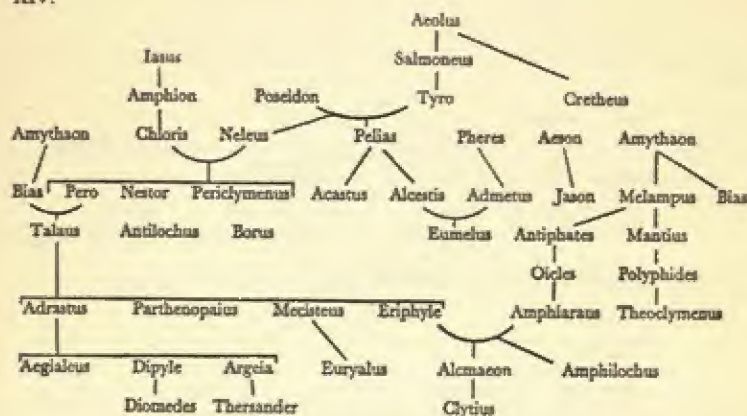
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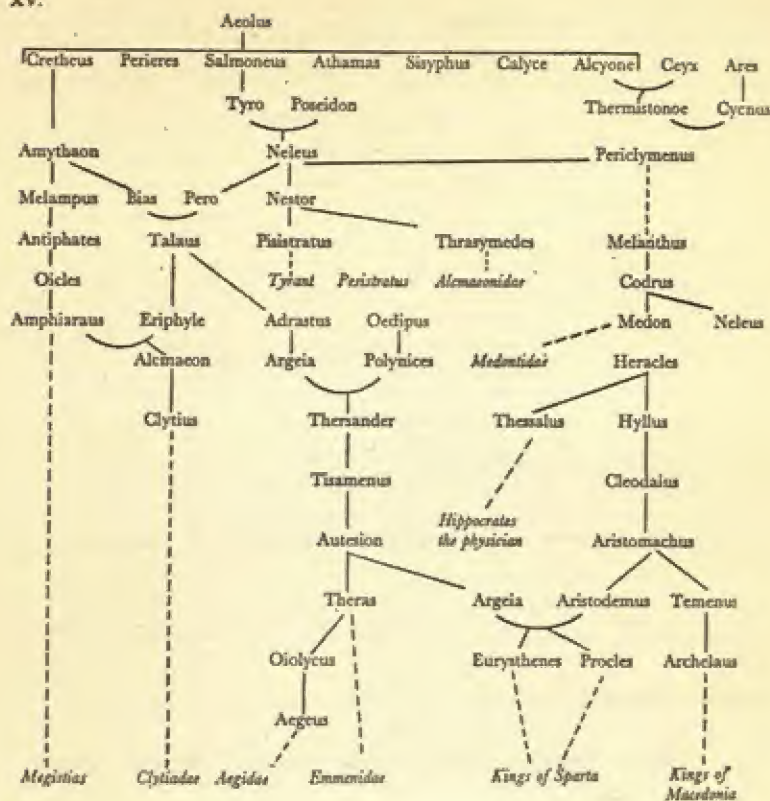
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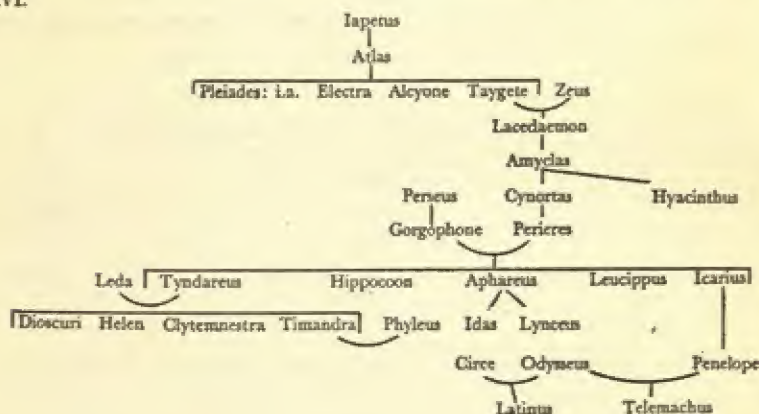
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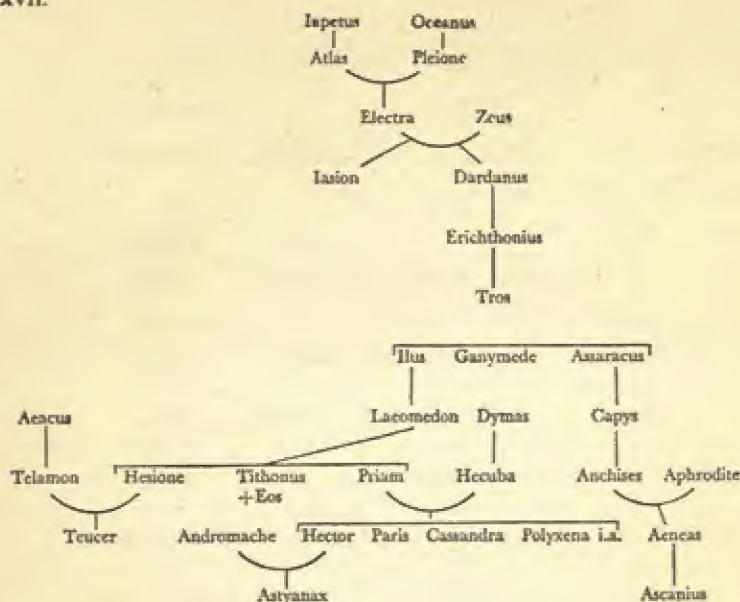
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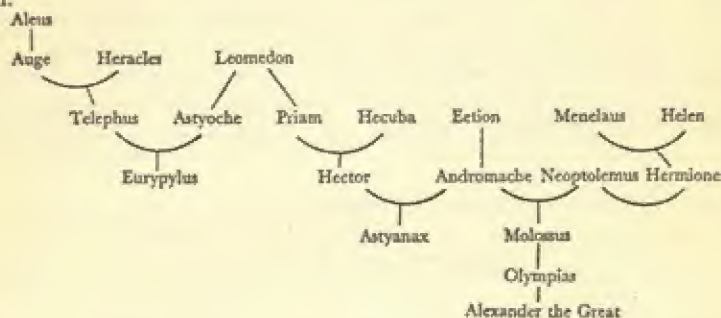
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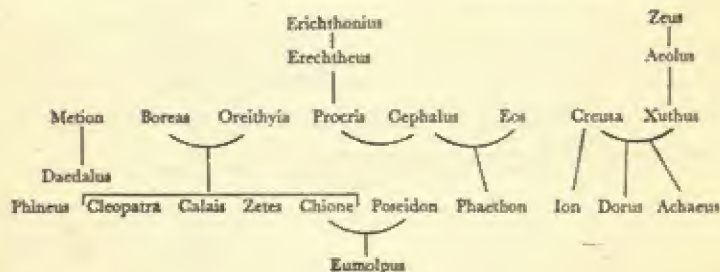
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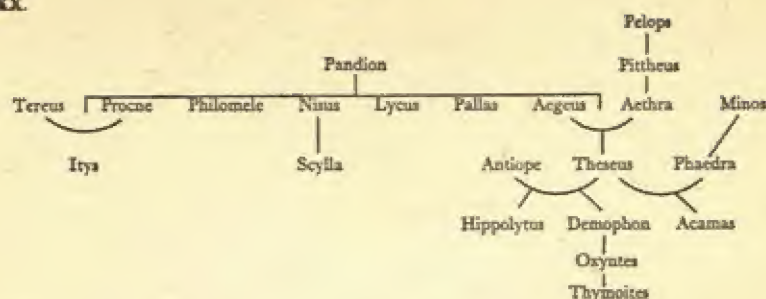
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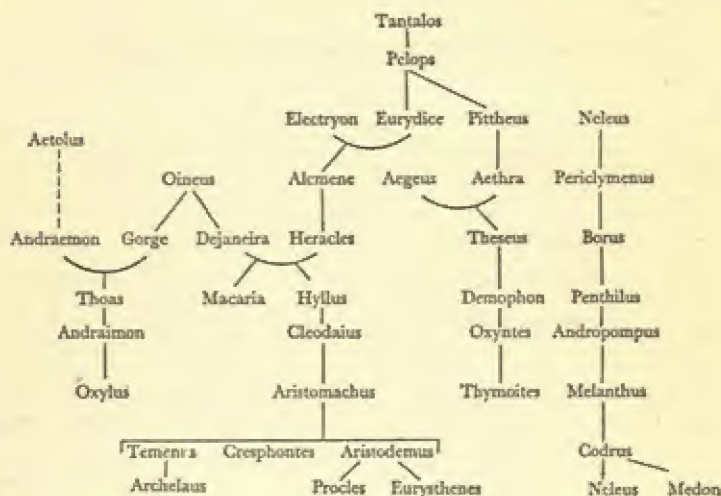
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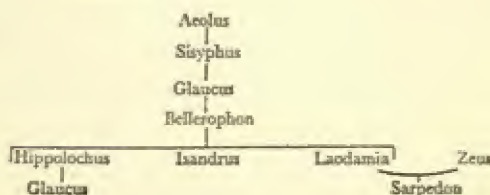
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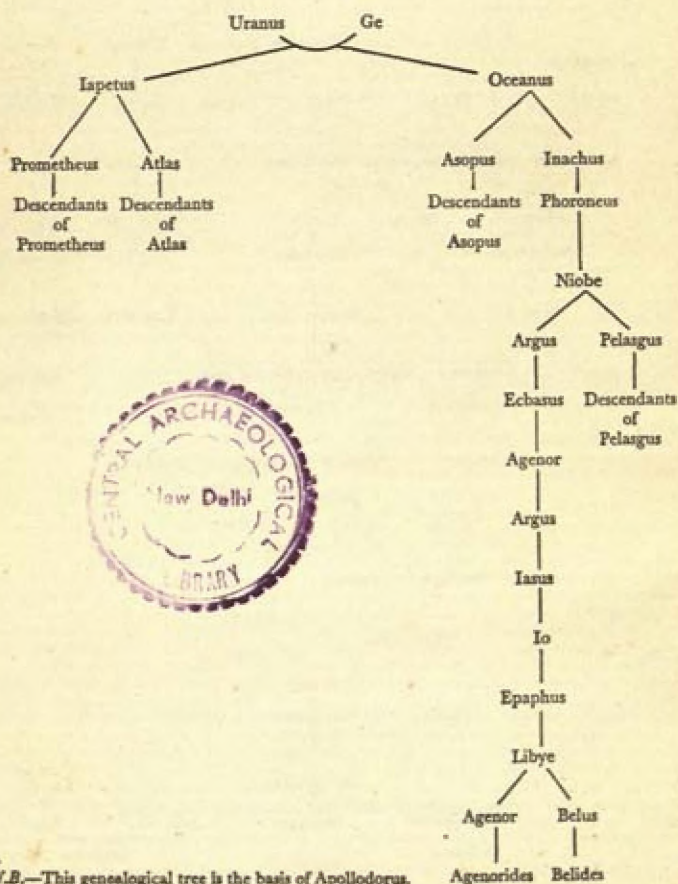


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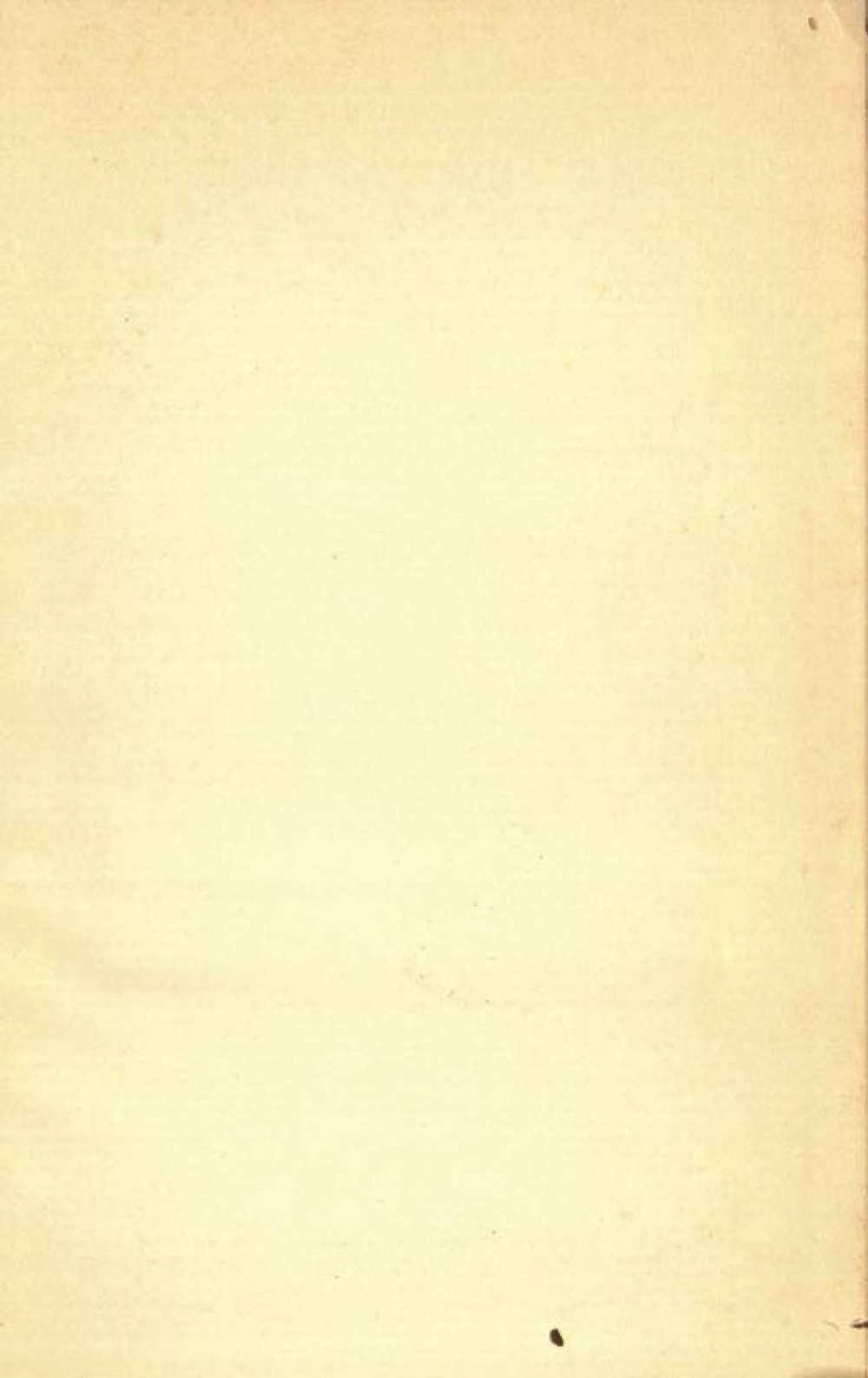
N.B.—The Family Trees XXII to XXIV are taken from Homer.

XXV.



N.B.—This genealogical tree is the basis of Apollodorus.





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